

THE GOVERNOR OF MASSACHUSETTS

A NOVEL BY
ELLIOT PAUL
AUTHOR OF "THE AMAZON," ETC.

SUGAR

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THE GOVERNOR OF MASSACHUSETTS

By ELLIOT PAUL

Author of *The Amazon*, *Indelible*,
Imperturbe, etc.

ELLIOT PAUL uses his crisp, easy style, his heightened sense of the dramatic and his personal background of the New Englander, for this smashing story of a simple, idealistic man who is precipitated into politics by pure chance.

You are taken into the life of this Massachusetts manufacturer who dwells in rich patriarchal fashion on his splendid farm. You live on Griffin's estate with him, know intimately the varied types who are his children, know his dreams for them,

(Continued on back flap)

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Paul, Elliot H.

The governor of
Massachusetts

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, SACRAMENTO

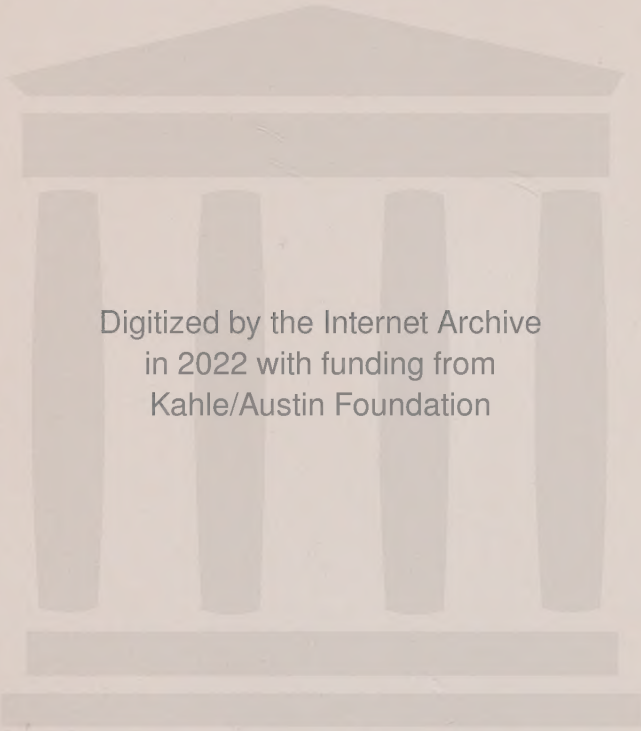
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THE GOVERNOR OF MASSACHUSETTS

*To think that two and two are four,
And never five nor three,
The heart of man has long been sore,
And long is like to be.*

E. A. HOUSMAN

THE GOVERNOR OF MASSACHUSETTS



A Novel in Three Parts by

ELLIOT PAUL

AUTHOR OF *Indelible, Impromptu,*
Imperturbe,
Low Run Tide AND *Lava Rock,*
The Amazon, ETC.



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TO
RUTH AND JAY ALLEN

PART ONE



IT WOULD be impossible for me to say how I happened to take up the study of law. At the university I had to be studying something and my father was set on my doing something useful, as he expressed it. He had slaved all his life and had no use for a man who wouldn't work. I never really expected to practice, still I found the history and the theory interesting enough, so long as I could rummage around the libraries and pick up odd bits without attending classes. I got my degree, God knows how, and passed the bar examination, for I was afraid that if I flunked father would cut off my income. Small as it was, it would permit me to live in a furnished room, eat three meals a day and in the summer do a little traveling. Up to that time I had never earned a cent and was not sure I could support myself if I had to. At any rate, I preferred not to try.

My troubles did not stop when I became a member of the bar. In fact, they grew more acute. I convinced father that studying had tired me and that before I settled down to the long grind of building up a practice I should take a little trip. In that way I got in four marvelous months abroad, but I knew he would expect me to get right down to business when I got back. For a young lawyer that meant running errands, collecting bills, dusting and sorting

documents in long rows of files, and all the drudgery of preparing briefs for which the older men in the office would get credit if the case were won and the novice would take the blame if it were lost. I simply couldn't face it, and was wondering if I could make a breakdown in health convincing and be ordered to Switzerland for a cure, when I thought of Asa Perkins.

I had heard Asa Perkins in court one day when I should have been in the classroom. He was defending a couple of kind old women who belonged to some one of Boston's queer religious sects and believed it their duty to feed the rats. Their neighbors had had them arrested for creating a nuisance. It was a treat to hear Asa Perkins before a jury. He was opposed by a rather fresh young Jew who made fun of the women right before their faces. Asa didn't bother to challenge or cross-examine witnesses but when it came his turn to argue he took off his glasses, wiped them, cleared his throat and began way back somewhere about the time of the Magna Charta, tracing the growth of the rights of man and touching upon the constant rise in the value of human kindness. When he referred to his clients, he bowed in their direction and reminded the jurymen that, as well as having been solicitous for the rats, those good women had fed and comforted many a wayfarer who would have hesitated to lift the ornate bronze knockers on the doors of the brown-stone mansions of Beacon street. I had been obliged to leave before the close, but the recollection of his humorous gray eyes which lightened the effect of his eloquence, his clothes which were like those portrayed in a family album, and the skillful way in which he appeased the judge with his subtle wit as he swayed the jury with his sonorous phrases, made me think of him as representing what I should like

to be, for he had an Epicurean air and a deliberate way proceeding which I felt sure could not be easily disturbed.

So while I was reluctantly trying to arrange to spend my time in some way which would discharge what father conceived to be my debt to society, a mysterious instinct led my footsteps to Park street, where Asa Perkins' office overlooked the historic burying ground which fronted on Tremont street. On the day I called there, I noticed that Mr. Perkins was reading, not a law book, but a London comic weekly dated twelve years back. A pert middle-aged woman sat at a table in the small entry-room in front of a door marked "Mr. Perkins." She asked me if I had an appointment and looked rather uneasy because there was mud on my rubbers. When I admitted that I had come unexpectedly she motioned me to take the only remaining chair and went into the inner office to ask if Mr. Perkins could see me. Through the door I saw him leaning back in his battered swivel chair, chuckling over the magazine. Nevertheless it was with a manner which implied that I was receiving an extraordinary favor that the woman ushered me in. The main office was carpeted and roomy, lined with leather-bound volumes, and the roll-top desk was stuffed full of pamphlets, court decisions, letters, briefs and copies of the Fisherman's Gazette. Mr. Perkins rose courteously and asked me to sit down, placing my chair near the window where I could look down upon the weather-beaten gravestones, the trees half stripped of leaves and the dripping buildings on the far side of Tremont street. He seemed surprised but not displeased that I had called and showed no impatience to learn what had brought me there. I noticed that his clothes were essentially the same as those he had worn in the courtroom,—a dark

swallow-tail coat, striped gray trousers, a tall stand-up collar with wings rather broad, and an old-fashioned four-in-hand tie which nearly covered the stiff bosom of his shirt. Just inside the roll-top desk, in the shelter of some memoranda, stood a wine glass half full of port.

I told Mr. Perkins self-consciously that I had just been admitted to the bar, at which he bowed politely, and that having returned recently from London I wished to resume my studies in the office of a practicing attorney. He did not catch on at first. At the mention of London he looked from the window a bit wistfully and said it had been many years since he had been there. As soon as he realized that I wished to enter his office he controlled his astonishment in a magnificent way and explained that his practice was so limited and his cases so rare that it would scarcely be worth any one's while to be associated with him. I replied at once that the prospect of so few cases was what attracted me most and caught the implication of my eager remark too late to retract it. It was then that he smiled with an almost radiant appreciation, reached beneath the desk for the bottle of port, and poured a glass for me.

"Perhaps we shall understand each other," he said. And a moment later. "But what prompted you to be a lawyer?"

I explained my father's feelings concerning work and my absolute dependence upon my meager income. Even then I hardly dared to hope that he would consent to let me stay, for it seemed as if his peace were perfectly established, but he was a man of whims and at the moment was tired of being alone. His clients were mostly old friends he had known on Cape Ann, where he had first practiced. He had some of their funds in trust, but they were well invested and required little attention. He said that his eyes were troubling him a little, so that he could not read all day, and

I suspect that is the principal reason I was taken into his office. As we were sitting there, he called in the janitor and asked him to dust the small, unused ante-room adjacent to his office and to wash the windows. At the same time, with a gracious gesture, he gave me leave to consider that in the future the room was mine. My view was similar to his, except that the window was smaller. In addition to a rather gaunt radiator there was a small fireplace with a coal grate. I bought a desk in a junkshop on Cambridge street.

The next two or three years were among the most pleasant of my life, in spite of the fact that the female clerk treated me always as an intruder. Since Mr. Perkins had all the standard law books on his shelves, we decided to embellish my office with old or curious volumes, and spent a few hours each day in the second-hand book stores. Father was very much impressed when he learned how Asa Perkins was respected by the bar and the judiciary. Before he forgot me in the pressure of his own affairs he gave me a substantial check to help me install myself properly and began to believe I might not turn out as badly as he had feared. I could tell when Mr. Perkins would be glad to have a talk with me by the squeaking of his swivel chair, for when he read he did so with an amazing concentration and would hardly have moved if the building had caught fire. Once in a great while a client would come to see him, but during that first rainy winter we were left very much to ourselves and I read with avidity the records of the trials at Old Bailey, translations of old Icelandic statutes and cases, testimony of witchcraft trials in France and at Salem, freak decisions of the pioneer courts of our western states, in fact, nearly anything which had no immediate bearing upon what was taking place around us.

In the evening, I frequently would call at Mr. Perkins' club where we played chess and, on the rare occasions when there was an interesting performance at the theater or a concert of old music, we attended together.

From the bookshops on Cornhill or in Pemberton Square it was only a few steps to Bixby's, Mr. Perkins' favorite saloon in the market district, where demijohns hung from smoke-stained rafters and a little sink of well-scrubbed wood with shelves of bottles and glasses above it was provided for the customers who preferred to mix their own drinks. There we would go for whiskey and soda in the late afternoon and sit quietly until the crowd from the business offices began pouring through the streets on the way to the North Station and traffic rumbled ominously over the cobblestones of the narrow cross-town alleys. Very quickly, and without any verbal arrangement, our days fell into a pleasant routine which gave us time for individual study or reflection and brought us together when it was better not to be alone. I still lived in my furnished room on Pinckney street but I arranged with the woman who worked around the house to prepare my breakfast of coffee and rolls and bring it to my bedside in the morning, hoping that by no unfortunate accident this news should reach the ears of my folks. I planned on arriving at the office about nine thirty, since all the other offices in the building opened at half past eight or nine o'clock. In everything I did I enjoyed the independence of a deliberate rhythm and since my friends saw so little of me they decided that I had taken life seriously, at last, and was living in solitude, wrapt in study. They had never thought I would steady down, and were somewhat awed.

Mr. Perkins came in at ten, but I seldom disturbed him until lunch time. I read and, as I mused, looked over the

gravestones and the tangled tops of trees, and I had an upper curtain hung so as to cut off the sight of the clock on the steeple of the Park street church. I detest to have the sodden measurement of time go on before my eyes. Unless Mr. Perkins had an appointment, we lunched together at Young's, where the colored waiters knew him and loved to cater to his taste. The cellar included a claret which the waiters had secretly named for him because he had chosen it so often, and as he sipped the wine whose color and fragrance gave perpetual token of nature's beneficence, sometimes he would speak of the vineyards of Bordeaux and the hazy light which rests over France. He referred to Europe, and especially London, so affectionately that I often wondered why he did not live there, but naturally I would not have presumed to ask such a question. When we returned to the office, well after the hour at which the lawyers around us had resumed their work, he would invariably inquire politely of Miss Zinc whether any one had called and would sigh with relief as she said, somewhat severely, "Not to-day."

On Monday afternoons, however, we made it our habit to take in a burlesque show, usually at the Old Howard. It was one of the vagrancies of Mr. Perkins' taste, for while he would travel to New York to see *Œdipus Rex* or just to hear one group of songs by Purcell or Orlando Gibbons, he laughed aloud and slapped his knees delightedly when a row of heavy women, bosoms bouncing in time to a popular tune execrably played, would appear from the moth-eaten wings of the Howard; and especially if a garter broke or a section of the scenery tumbled over and upset the show. He would turn to watch the faces of the ice-men, chamber-maids and coal heavers behind him when a slapstick incident was being prepared for them, seeing

their hearty mirth come floating to the surface of their minds like carp when the import of a joke finally reached them. He liked to go on Monday, since it was the first performance of the show and was sure to be ragged. The man at the box-office greeted Mr. Perkins with a respectful, "Good afternoon, professor," and saved seats for us in bald-headed row.

"Look at those tights," I can hear Mr. Perkins say as the curtain rose. "They haven't been washed since the show left Philadelphia."

His preference for good-sized women was consistent. After we were thoroughly acquainted he invited me one Saturday evening to call on a friend of his, and I tried to show no surprise when, as we were ushered into a little top-story flat on Joy street, a husky dark-haired woman threw her arms around his neck and kissed him heartily before she noticed me standing there. He introduced me and she gripped my hand firmly, her eyes still shining with pleasure, and pulled me into her living room. Her name was Eileen and her accents unmistakably Irish.

Mr. Perkins was one of the few bachelors who, as he grew old, did not express a single regret at not having married. He did not gloat about his condition but I noticed that when he came upon picturesque law records involving matrimonial tangles he seemed particularly gleeful as he read between the lines. For twenty years before I knew him he had been spending Wednesday and Saturday nights with Eileen Ryan. She had seen him and had become infatuated with him when she was eighteen years old and a cloak girl in one of the hotel dining rooms he frequented. He was forty at the time but from what she said he must have been almost the same as when I made his acquaintance. He had thought of himself as quite old until she fell

in love with him, she said. He had wanted her to quit work, after a while, but she never would consent to do it. The thought of marrying him never entered her mind. Neither did the idea of living with him constantly. It would have disturbed her respect for his learning. But she consented to let him rent the little flat she occupied and got an easy job in the State House Lunch across the way. It had never ceased to be a marvel to her that she, an ignorant girl, could give pleasure to a man whom every one recognized as one of the best lawyers in the city, and that such a learned man could sit down to a game of cribbage and get happily drunk before rolling into bed. It was equally wonderful to her that a man could have manners which in twenty years, whether he was drunk or sober, she had never known to vary.

WE were sitting together in the office one winter afternoon, Mr. Perkins and I, when I saw him go to the window and watch intently and with some dismay the progress of an automobile through the slush of Tremont street. For some years an automobile had been a common sight but they had not been used extensively in winter and the fire department still clung to its horses. I had been reading a part of *Tristram Shandy* aloud and Mr. Perkins knew the text so well that he would tap the proper number of times upon his desk when asterisks occurred.

*Cannot you contrive, master, quoth Susannah, lifting up the sash with one hand . . .,—cannot you manage my dear, for a single time, to *****?*

He was especially fond of that chapter, made catastrophic by the lack of a chamber pot and a window-weight, and I realized that his attention to the stray automobile had nothing to do with the book we had just laid down. He grew thoughtful, almost irritable, pacing the floor, and I discreetly retired to my smaller room to let his mood develop. At the hour when usually we started for Bixby's he was still fidgeting around his office and made no move to go. I did not like to remind him of the hour so I sat quietly, refraining even from turning on the light. When dinner

time arrived, however, I tried to slip out quietly but he heard my hand upon the door.

"Have you anything on this evening?" he asked. "I didn't realize it was so late."

I had no engagement and was sure from his tone that he had something important to talk about, important not in the sense of our discoveries of rare twists of jurisprudence but affecting somehow the part of life we were accustomed to avoid.

"Not a thing in the world," I replied. "Could we dine together?"

"A good idea," he said, almost fervently, as if to convey that the idea of dining in company did not lose its significance nor grow trite with the passage of time. The prospect of a meal was sure to awaken a genuine enthusiasm in him. He took from its hook in the closet his limp felt hat which had faded to blend with the stones of the oldest streets, put on his waterproof coat and overshoes, stood in the entry-room uncertainly a moment, deciding where we had better go for food, then led the way toward Woodbury's on Washington street. It was the season for venison. As we walked along his lengthy stride kept him always a little in advance of me, so that when he had something to say he would pause and look over his shoulder. We dined well, talking in a desultory way of things suggested by what was in the room and not until we had been served with brandy and coffee did he mention the automobile. I did not hurry him.

"If those damn things can run in any weather the streets will soon be full of them," he began, assuming that I had divined the cause of his perturbation.

"The situation's getting out of hand," I said. His love of horses was one of his strong characteristics, although he had not owned one since he first started practicing in Gloucester.

The only public celebrations he ever took the slightest interest in were the circus parades and the work horse parade on Labor Day.

"There was a time when a man could invest, and let his money lie without troubling about it," he went on, and I saw that I was off the track. But in his leisurely way he soon made things clear to me. A few years before, street railway companies had expanded and merged and spread in all directions over the state. They had looked like a sure and steady means of transportation and Mr. Perkins had bought stock for a number of his clients and had invested his trust funds in the soundest and most promising companies. That afternoon the sight of the automobile on the wintry street had given him a swift and unpleasant glance into the future. His knowledge of antiquity and his sense of the passing of empires sharpened his foresight and made it impossible for him to think of the present as static. If automobiles could proceed through slush and snow, small vehicles would not run on rails much longer. As he outlined what was likely to happen, the development seemed quite obvious to me.

"We shall have to work for a while," he said.

During the month that followed, our quiet refuge on Park street was invaded by the clients of which I had heard him speak affectionately but never had had occasion to see. They came, one or two each day, in response to letters which Miss Zinc had written painstakingly by hand and had recorded by means of a slab of gelatine which had stood idly in the corner for some time. She sniffed whenever she heard the click of a typewriter in the corridors or saw a typist well-shaped enough to seem amenable to sin.

Wads and sheaves of papers were scooped from the roll-top desk and sorted upon the table, while angry cockroaches

scurried in the bottom drawers, exposed to the light of day. Mr. Perkins hated the appearance of too much order, but when a document had to be signed he managed to find it, somewhere, annoyed by the dust upon his fingers and the exertion which attended the opening of warped doors or the exploration of obscure pigeonholes. He had previously discussed with me the field for new investment and I, without knowing a thing about the details of the market, had reached a conclusion which pleased him. Still thinking of the troublesome automobile, I reflected that the frame and the engine and springs were made of steel. I was not sure of that until I had asked a mechanic but after I had satisfied myself that my conjecture was correct I passed on the idea to Mr. Perkins. After consulting some brokers he agreed that steel would be safe. He completed the transfer of his trust funds from street railways to steel and then, as his clients appeared in response to Miss Zinc's careful letters, told them what he had done and what had prompted him to make the change. In each instance he would introduce them to me, as his associate, and speak flatteringly of my abilities. They were an impressive and picturesque lot. Some of the women wore bonnets, a few carried lorgnettes, and one he called Lottie wore tailored clothes, slapped him on the back and smoked a cigar while Miss Zinc paced angrily up and down the entry-room, banging her heels on the floor.

"Go ahead," I heard Lottie say as their interview closed. "I'm no God-damned pre-Raphaelite."

Mr. Perkins was called into court one morning unexpectedly to help one of his successful friends with a troublesome problem of the old common law and before he returned a man came in whom I had seen in the office once or twice before and whom Mr. Perkins had treated with

extreme cordiality. I explained Mr. Perkins' absence and invited the man to sit down, saying Mr. Perkins would surely be back in a moment. The caller introduced himself as Elijah Griffin. He was a diffident little man with a rather pale complexion and long, slender hands. His hair was chestnut brown and he wore a beard in Prince Albert style and although his eyes were a little sunken and tired he seemed to be alert and vigorous but decidedly nervous and shy. With him I had no impulse to speak in jest, as I did with Mr. Perkins, but I learned at once from what he said that he had known Asa in Gloucester when both of them were boys. That was the case with many of the clients. The successful men on Cape Ann had moved to the capital as the shipping and the fisheries had begun to wane. Mr. Perkins' appointment as arbitrator of an important government fisheries dispute had won him a nation-wide reputation and he had followed his clients to Boston somewhat regretfully but without delay.

It was rather hard to keep up a conversation with Mr. Griffin. He appeared willing and anxious to talk but almost unaccustomed to it and I was so hazy about current events that words did not come very readily. As soon as he heard Mr. Perkins' step in the entry, however, he brightened and rose to greet him, placing his worn kid gloves on the table preparatory to shaking hands.

"How are you, Lije?" Mr. Perkins said, without waiting to take off his coat.

"How are you, Asa?" Mr. Griffin replied. "I got your note."

I started to retire, but Mr. Perkins motioned for me to remain.

"We're old friends," he said.

Their talk was mostly about their acquaintances on the

North shore and when Mr. Perkins mentioned briefly what had caused him to write, Mr. Griffin asked him somewhat wistfully if he would not take Sunday dinner at his house and spend the afternoon.

"It's a long time since you've seen the place," he said. I was included in the invitation and because I had become curiously interested to know more of Mr. Griffin I accepted, although it occurred to me afterwards that I might be in the way. I suggested this to Mr. Perkins, after his friend had gone, but he urged me to go along.

"There are not many such places left in Massachusetts," he added.

THE association thus commenced had many strange results. Eileen's little flat was just a step from my rooming house, and on Sunday morning I found Mr. Perkins there with the papers scattered around him on the floor and Eileen making toast in the kitchen.

"Have a good time," she said, as she tucked in his scarf and handed him his battered felt hat.

We walked down the back of the hill to the North Station and took a train for West Everett, as Mr. Griffin had directed, for the branch train which would have taken us directly to the town in which he lived ran only on weekdays. He met us at the station with his carry-all, the black upholstered cushions of which had been neatly dusted but not entirely purged of a wholesome, horse fragrance. The span of horses he was driving were thoroughbred twins, both geldings, and stood tremulously as the train puffed away, reassured by occasional words he addressed to them. He turned without the faintest scraping of the wheel and headed them north and eastward. We soon left behind that dreary area of factories and gas houses, where the sharp smell of Medford rum from the distillery cut the chemicals and smoke.

After following for two miles the Newburyport Turnpike, originally called the King's Highway, we turned east-

ward on a bleak road which skirted a range of hills and entered the boundaries of the town of Eastford on a hill from the crest of which we could see all the way to the seashore, miles distant. The valley, which was formed by the Mystic river and a tributary of Old Saugus creek, was marked by rambling lanes, stone walls and clusters of trees, with houses grouped at sparse intervals and forlorn stations here and there by the railroad which made its way toward the Lynn marsh and disappeared. The Griffin estate lay between us and the center of Eastford, which was the neatest and most pretentious of all the towns secluded there. The slopes of the estate were patched with the remnants of a light fall of snow which had long been forgotten in the city. The nearer we came to it, the broader and more fertile it appeared, even in its least impressive season. A man Mr. Griffin addressed as Melzer met us at the head of the driveway and led the horses to the stable as our host preceded us up the low flight of steps to open the door.

The house was austere and spacious, painted white, and of harmonious Colonial design; and wings had been added with a thought for the beauty of the original building and had not marred the front nor the general effect of the whole. I had time for only a fleeting glimpse of the exterior as I entered. Inside, the furnishings were massive and in excellent taste, with heavy Brussels carpets on the floors and winding staircase, oil portraits and landscape paintings on the walls and a subdued light except in the space around the broad bay windows which were of comparatively recent date. Dinner was ready to be served, for it was past one o'clock, and after a hasty introduction to Mr. Griffin's three daughters and two awkward sons we took our places at the table. It was not hard to see that Mr. Griffin was a widower.

The dining room on the north side of the house had a

somber tone, with carved mahogany woodwork and an entire wall lined with shelves which disclosed behind glass doors arrays of dishes, platters, china tea sets, soup toureens, silver service and rows of colored glass goblets. After we sat down there was a moment of silence in which I had the presence of mind to stop unfolding my napkin, and Mr. Griffin said:

"Perhaps you will ask the blessing, Asa?"

To my amazement, Mr. Perkins closed his eyes, bowed his head and, employing the richest timbres of his voice, began:

"O bountiful Father in Heaven, we thank Thee for the food Thou setteth here before us. We thank Thee for the pasture, and the orchard and the vine; for the sun which at Thy behest shines down upon us; for the rain with which Thou gently replenisheth the earth. We ask Thy pardon if we have condoned injustices, and for feasting while others among our brethren starve.

"Let Thy light pierce the veil of our iniquity and Thy compassion temper our conceit.

"And this we ask in humbleness, knowing that our blessings here are as wraiths of mist to reflect the joys of Thy celestial kingdom.

"In the name of Thy dearly-beloved Son who deigned to share our life, and was crucified. Amen."

Because his eyes had been closed, his words had seemed more than usually earnest and I racked my mind an instant to try and recall whether I had ever heard him express a special preference for the Christian religion. I could not remember that I had, and concluded that his exquisite prayer was one of his casual acts of grace and an exercise of the eloquence he so seldom had occasion to use. He had no sooner raised his head than by means of a quick remark

he sent a vivid blush to the cheeks and broad forehead of Mattie, the oldest daughter, who was plump, with rather dainty hands and feet, and even in her early twenties had a matronly air. Whenever she was surprised, the blood rushed to her face and she smiled and was helpless for a while. Her eyes were brown, and fine, but their fineness was rather in their shape and color than their expression. She seemed languid and good-natured and a bit petulant because she had been obliged to take care of the others so much. Her womanliness could not be overlooked. She looked settled and immovable in every posture. I got a lasting impression of Mattie due to the fact that Mr. Perkins singled her out for so much of his conversation. He talked wittily with Mr. Griffin and with me; showed his appreciation of the well-cooked victuals and the harmony of the appointment; asked Charley, the younger boy, about the stock and the plans for the garden. The meal went off successfully and Mr. Griffin gradually grew almost expansive as host. Even those who took no part in the conversation were not uneasy and I could sense that they all wished Mr. Perkins might be there every day.

Afterward, as we passed through the hallway, Mr. Perkins took Mary, the youngest daughter, by the arm affectionately and said to her so that only I could hear:

"You certainly are the image of your mother, child."

"Oh. You knew my mother?" Mary asked. Her voice, unlike those of the other Griffins, was clear and musical, rather low in pitch. She had been seated at my right, and since she had turned more often to Mr. Perkins than to me, I had first been struck with her long eyelashes and sensitive profile. The idea that Mr. Perkins had known her mother seemed so novel and even startling to her that I

mentioned her attitude to him the first moment we were alone.

"She is the daughter of Elijah's second wife," he explained. "All the others are his first wife's children."

That was the last I saw of the younger members of the family that day. Mr. Griffith, Mr. Perkins and I went into the library to smoke. It was evident that the room had been used at some time in the past by a clergyman. A stern-faced copy of a portrait of Calvin faced the window from the depths of the narrow room and in one corner was a tremendous Bible on a wooden stand. The books were mostly black-bound volumes of sermons and ethical treatises and I could see Mr. Perkins' quick eyes roving from shelf to shelf to find a book he would like to open. There were commentaries on the Scriptures, Shakespeare and the usual assortment of Longfellow, Dickens, Whittier, Scott, James Russell Lowell and Ralph Waldo Emerson, Pilgrim's Progress, Paradise Lost, Famous Quotations and Franklin's Autobiography. I was familiar with each of the editions, having handled scores just like them in pawing over the counters of the stores on Cornhill. The books were used for decoration, however, like the extra dishes in the dining room. I felt sure Mr. Griffin had read nothing but the Morning Advertiser since he had been graduated from the Gloucester High School. In fact, nothing inside the house appeared to reflect Elijah Griffin's personality, although the stable and the orchard and broad pasture lands fitted exactly into a pattern which seemed natural to him. I learned that evening, on the way back to Boston, that Mr. Griffin had purchased the estate from a relative of his first wife, a descendant of Josiah Hoag who had emigrated from Mel-dun, England, in 1629.

I should have liked to go through the house, room by

room, examining its contents as if it were a museum, but I had no such opportunity that first day. No one else paid the slightest attention to the objects among which they had lived so long and Mr. Perkins was so intent upon keeping his old friend cheerful that he did not realize how interesting the surroundings were to me. The cigars Mr. Griffin offered us were so very fine, a perfect Havana tobacco with a wrapper which was firm but not at all coarse, that I could not help remarking about their quality. He was pleased that I liked them and evidently appreciated their aroma himself, for he smoked with care and deliberation and not until the cigars were finished did Mr. Perkins take up the subject of street railways. First he explained to me that the cigars had been brought from Havana by Captain Tewksbury, Mr. Griffin's business partner, who never made a voyage without remembering to replenish the stock. I did not then inquire about the nature of Mr. Griffin's business, but assumed that it must be flourishing and profitable. He certainly did not look like a sea-faring man.

In that library, with an open fire burning beneath the portrait of Calvin, as I looked out over the stubble of the cornfield to the brook and the pasture and the shrouded hills beyond, the imminence of the conquest of street railways by automobiles was much less plausible than it had been at Woodbury's, over coffee and brandy. If it had been my responsibility to outline the course of transportation developments I could not then have made our theory convincing. It had been but a short span of years since horse-cars had been used in Eastford, Mr. Griffin said. An extra pair of horses had been stationed at the foot of the hill, within sight of the library window, to help pull the cars up the steep slope in slippery weather. Fortunately Mr. Perkins, while he was responsive to his surroundings, was less likely

to let them upset the workings of his intellect. The change, in view of Eastford's gentle situation, was more to be regretted but not the less to be expected and provided against.

Our host was perturbed at the mention of automobiles. The only bad runaway he had ever had came about through his meeting one on a narrow road with the geldings behind which we had ridden. Motor vehicles were dangerous and should be kept off the public ways, he believed. It was not right that a man should be allowed to frighten his neighbor's horses. Still in the matter of investments he was quite willing to follow Mr. Perkins' advice and example. The necessary papers were produced from Mr. Perkins' bulging pockets and Mr. Griffin was obliged to send to Anne's room for pen and ink since the contents of the inkwell in the library had dried up and solidified at least five years before. The business formalities over and our digestion being comfortably under way, Mr. Griffin took us through the stable, past the rumps of four dozen Jersey and Holstein cows and into the special section where each of his horses had roomy box stalls and individual drinking pails with their names painted on them. The draft horses were grays, four shaggy and powerful Percherons, and besides the geldings and another rangy thoroughbred which was driven with a gig, was a spiteful looking pony named Kate for the girls to drive. In the carriage shed were buggies, the carry-all and a variety of sleighs, the lightest perched upon the rafters, and in one corner was a closed wooden carriage with folding steps and painted doors. A white-washed shed was filled with Brahma hens.

Because it was so wet underfoot we did not walk through the orchard which consisted of twelve long rows of pear and apple trees, with a few peach trees and one or two tall cherry trees near the house. They all looked somewhat alike

to me, in their leafless state, but after their differences were called to my attention I could readily distinguish their characteristic shapes and attitudes. In order to show us the town and the surrounding country, Mr. Griffin asked Melzer to hitch up the geldings again and we drove farther eastward on the high road which skirted the woods until the range of hills came to an end abruptly in an exposed granite ledge already dented by a quarry. We stopped by the idle stone crusher to look out over the three-mile expanse of marsh which stretched from the foot of the hills to the sea, incredibly marked by the tortuous creek which passed through the Griffin meadow. It was a wild and splendidly desolate view which dampened still further my visions of mechanical progress. I should have thoroughly enjoyed the drive if I had been dressed for it and I observed that Mr. Perkins was shivering unostentatiously in his thin waterproof topcoat. I wondered at the time how Mr. Griffin was able to withstand the chill and concluded that he must have on the kind of heavy flannel underwear which I had seen on bargain counters but had never had occasion to wear.

OUR flurry of business appointments was soon over. Mr. Perkins bore up well while it lasted, receiving each of his callers with cordiality, but for many days after the last had been interviewed he was moody and unable to settle down to his books. He drank rather more than usual and I tip-toed in and out of the office, trying to be inconspicuous and to recapture the rhythm we had enjoyed before. I should have been glad if some cloak-room girl, lithe, dark-haired and worshipful, had thrown herself into my arms on a rainy night but none of them was impelled to do so. Gradually our office became tranquil again and Miss Zinc resumed her embroidery, but in the interim I was somewhat lonely. I paid a dutiful visit to my family and for want of ready conversation told my father in confidence that we had been advising our clients to take their money out of street railway stocks but I think he paid little attention to the suggestion. He had not grown accustomed to taking me seriously. I met Eileen on the street and she told me she thought Mr. Perkins had been working too hard. She had never been inside the office but she looked up at the window whenever she passed and liked to imagine the mysterious things which must take place there.

The less I had to occupy my mind the longer I seemed to be able to sleep in the morning, so that one day I arrived

at the office after ten o'clock and found Mr. Perkins in a rage crumpling the morning paper in one hand and complaining violently to Miss Zinc, who for once was relieved to see me enter. He followed me into my little room, cursing and gesticulating. The item which had excited him so was a short interview with the State prison physician who had said that if Joseph Poole, an elderly banker confined at Charlestown, was not soon released his health would be irrevocably impaired. There were two famous prisoners in Massachusetts the mention of whom was sure to arouse Mr. Perkins' anger. One was Joseph Poole, who had been given a long term for having lost depositors' money in the market when slower investments had unexpectedly gone bad. The other was Jesse Pomeroy, who had killed several boys in his youth and by a special act of the General Court had been sentenced to spend the remainder of his life in solitary confinement. A special cell had been constructed so that he could not see the face of the guard who brought him his food, nor converse with him. Pomeroy had been in prison, under these conditions, eighteen years.

The storm which the reminder of Joseph Poole's predicament had raised in Mr. Perkins' mind was difficult to allay. I persuaded him at last to come with me to Bixby's where we sat for hours drinking whiskey. For a while each drink made him gloomier but after lunch time he calmed down and began to cite famous miscarriages of justice until the one which had rankled took its place among historical precedents and he was able to view them all philosophically. In the reaction which resulted Mr. Perkins grew more jovial and at last got thoroughly drunk. It was very unusual for him to drink to excess. Not wanting to drive him to his club in such condition I helped him into a disreputable-looking cab and left him at Eileen's flat, although

it was not his usual evening for visiting her. She was glad to see him in any condition and winked at me to indicate that everything would be all right in the morning. The next day he appeared in excellent spirits with a brand-new four-in-hand tie and a flower in his buttonhole, smelling of carnation and bay rum. I had asked Miss Zinc if he had been connected in any way with the Poole case and she said that he had offered his services to the defense but that the lawyers for Poole had been so confident of getting the banker off that they had not called in Mr. Perkins.

"I believe," Mr. Perkins said that morning, "that we should go to see Elijah Griffin again. He is always so glad to have company."

I do not know why, after so many years had passed during which Mr. Perkins had seen his old friend infrequently, that our visit to Eastford stirred in him a sense of responsibility for Mr. Griffin. But I felt the same way myself, to a lesser degree. The old house and the grounds were so charming and Mr. Griffin so evidently appreciative of them that it seemed to me a great pity that the master of such an estate should not enjoy life more thoroughly. It was the family of motherless children which weighed upon him, I suppose, and I could see that they were a difficult lot, phlegmatic and taciturn, and accustomed to remaining silent during the only occasions they were all brought together. Mary was the only exception. She was like a moonstone on a dark cloth, catching high lights from a distance while reflecting her dull surroundings. I wished that I might have seen her out of doors.

Mr. Perkins, without waiting for me to reply, was writing.

"There," he said, handing me the note he had scribbled. "That ought to do the trick." It had to do with a mortgage on the Eastford Congregational Church.

The first mail the next morning brought a stilted and cordial note urging us to meet Mr. Griffin at West Everett the following Sunday as before.

"You knew Mary's mother?" I asked, thinking of what he had said to her in the hallway.

"She died when the youngster was born," he said, "the year after she married Elijah."

"And what is Mr. Griffin's business?" I asked. My impatience and curiosity had got the better of me and I was no longer content to let facts come unsolicited.

"He is an organ manufacturer," Mr. Perkins replied.

"Surely not a musician?" I asked in some surprise.

"Mercy, no," said Mr. Perkins. "He doesn't know one note from another. An organ to him is a piece of furniture, and a beautiful piece of furniture, too. You didn't see the one in his parlor? You didn't see the parlor at all, did you? We must go in there on Sunday.

"Griffin and Tewksbury organs," Mr. Perkins continued, "are remarkable for their wood and their carving. The firm has employed an old German for years who looks after the musical end of it. Captain Tewksbury brings mahogany from Africa, a special growth about which he maintains great secrecy. The Captain is a shrewd old trader."

I could not believe that Mr. Griffin's function in the firm was a secondary one and that he was living solely on his partner's trading. Mr. Perkins resolved my doubts at once in this respect.

"Elijah has built up a wonderful trade," he said. "Long years ago, when well-to-do people were beginning to have organs in their parlors and the churches were buying them right and left Elijah's firm was losing business because of price cutting. He could not bear to give away expensive mahogany. So he got the idea of advertising Griffin and

Tewksbury organs as the best that money could buy and put up his prices while his competitors were slicing theirs. He used better materials and improved the finish and made the extra cost his principal selling point. He proved to be right, for poor men did not then buy organs. The other manufacturers saw their mistake, but not until Elijah had got a start on them."

I was glad Mr. Griffin's sagacity had been vindicated. After dinner on Sunday I stepped into the parlor and Mr. Griffin threw open the blinds so that I might examine the instrument. It was not the standard reed organ with which he had made his reputation but a two manual pipe organ, really intended for a church, and set upon a low platform. A heavy velvet curtain was hung behind it and with the gilded pipes and the black and white stops and keys it looked well in the richly furnished room, although somewhat massive in contrast to the Louis XIV chairs and narrow gilded picture frames. On the wall opposite the door which led in from the hallway was a portrait of a young woman the features of whom were familiar to me. The face reminded me of Charley, the younger boy, although the features were cold and the pose a trifle arrogant. The eyes were pale blue and the hair was scant and light brown. That must be the first wife, I said to myself.

Mr. Griffin darkened the parlor again as we went out and I could not help but wonder whether the organ was ever played. All the children had started taking lessons and except for Mary had failed to learn a single hymn, Mr. Perkins told me.

The weather was clear and mild for February and we walked down the long lane which was an extension of the driveway and led past the Congregational Church to the railroad crossing and the square, a distance slightly less

than a mile. Mr. Perkins strolled ahead with Mattie, leaving Mr. Griffin, Mary and me to follow a few yards behind them. There was a strong vibration of affection between Mary and her father which expressed itself only in isolated moments when they came together out of sight or notice of the others. Her eyes were sometimes gray and sometimes blue and the wind was always blowing her hair. It was easy to see what the others would be like in later years, but Mary was just approaching maturity and seemed surcharged with willful possibilities. Mr. Griffin explained what the various buildings were and when they had been put up, pointed out the houses of the oldest residents and the latest to arrive. He told me that the roads had been laid out and the trees had been planted by a former generation of the Hoags, from the heirs of whom he had bought his place. Each street had its characteristic tree. Salem Road, which bordered the hills, was lined with maples on the side nearest the town; Elm street, on which the street-cars ran, had been named for its trees; and Lynn street, which came into the square from the direction of Everett and Boston, was shaded by linden trees. As we turned into Lynn street, I noticed a low oblong building of yellow brick with an obtuse stucco roof.

"This is the library," Mr. Griffin said. Mary, I thought, turned pale and in passing I noticed a bronze slab on which was inscribed:

IN MEMORY
OF MY BELOVED WIFE
MARY TARR GRIFFIN

That Mr. Griffin supported a large part of the public institutions of Eastford became more and more apparent to

me. The mortgage on the Congregational Church, which had furnished us with a reason for our visit, had been running since the church was built and would be renewed indefinitely. Mr. Griffin had been a member of the board of selectmen for seventeen years and paid such a large proportion of the taxes that the improvements he did not donate directly really came out of his pocket.

The beauty of the town and the ramifications of Mr. Griffin's connection with it came over me increasingly as we walked along. At first I had been struck by the house and furnishings and Mr. Griffin, so diffident and unassuming, had not impressed me as the mainstay of a whole delightful community, the more delightful because it was within easy driving distance of Boston and at the same time had a rural spaciousness and fertility. Such a thought would have dismayed Mr. Griffin and would have ruffled his democratic neighbors, but it occurred to me that Eastford had many points of resemblance to the villages of England or of France where a single landlord cares for his tenants paternally and they look to him when an emergency arises.

I had lost a little of the stiffness which Mr. Griffin's dearth of words had occasioned when first I met him. As Asa's protégé he accepted me with less and less reserve and I was so much interested in learning about the town and indirectly about the family that my questions relieved him of the necessity of initiating conversation and he seemed really to be having a good time. Mary, unconsciously affected by her father's pleasant mood, rested her hand on my arm so that, walking between us, she did not keep me so far from Mr. Griffin that he had to raise his voice. At the southwestern limits of the town, we faced about and walked toward the square again and just before we reached it, a neighbor hailed Mr. Griffin from his doorway and

asked to speak to him about some business pending before the board of selectmen. Mary and I waited for him until Mr. Perkins and Mattie got several yards ahead, then we walked rather briskly to catch up with them, intending to let them know Mr. Griffin had been detained. As they were about to turn the corner into Elm street, we came up behind them but Mr. Perkins was in the midst of some oratorical outburst which bewildered and charmed Mattie, and was waving his arms and enjoying his voice so enthusiastically that I did not have the heart to interrupt him. A much more effective interruption occurred, however. For at the crossroads stood a smart black buggy to which was hitched a rangy and willful horse which was showing manifest signs of impatience. Upon the seat, holding the reins as if they were brittle, was a handsome young man with dark, thick mustaches, resplendently dressed and wearing a deep red carnation in his buttonhole. The horse, taking one of Mr. Perkins' gestures as a pretext, suddenly stood on his hind legs and began to dance.

Mr. Perkins, who for years had not handled horses, addressed the beast persuasively, almost imperiously, at which the animal balanced himself to listen but refused to bring his forelegs down to earth again. Mary laughed aloud, for the young man in the buggy, still holding the lines before him, showed much consternation on his face, and at the same time such determination to preserve his dignity, that the tableau was more ridiculous than ominous. Still, I was too excited to do anything. Mattie, turning deep red as if approaching a horse caused her as much embarrassment as encountering a stranger, stepped close to the animal and said, "Behave." Instantly the horse came down on all fours and stood as meekly as if nothing had happened. Mattie stroked his neck and spoke cajolingly to him, while the face

of the young man went through successive stages of gratitude and chagrin. We all thought the incident was closed and started to walk on again, but the moment Mattie took her hand from the horse's neck, he stood on his hind legs and the sweat began to run down the cheeks of the handsome stranger, wilting his stand-up collar and undermining his morale. Again, after comforting the horse, Mattie tried to withdraw and this time the animal pretended he was really wicked. Crimson with embarrassment, Mattie brought him to order again. Mary clung tightly to my arm and tried to keep her laughter inaudible. Mr. Perkins was as much at loss for appropriate action as I was. Finally Mattie, although it cost her great effort, asked the young man where he was going.

"I don't know," he said. "I was just out for a drive."

The rest of us, to tease Mattie, withdrew a short distance. Dismayed at being left alone with the stranger, she tried to follow us and the horse, sensing that she was really about to go away, all but upset the buggy. Mattie's motherly instinct took precedence over her extreme bashfulness, and after speaking petulantly to the horse, she motioned the young man to move over and stepped into the buggy beside him, taking the reins from his hands. She drove toward the house, not knowing what else to do, keeping the horse at a walk so as not to arrive before we did. Mr. Griffin brought up the rear, somewhat bewildered.

IT was not long before the Sundays at Eastford became a regular part of our week's program. Those of us who were naturally congenial gathered in the parlor if the weather was stormy or strolled around the town if it was fair. Fred Atwell, the young man we first saw in the buggy, called a fortnight after his rescue by Mattie to thank her and was invited to call again. Once his feet were on firm ground, he was entirely self-possessed and he took such an immediate liking to Mr. Perkins that he won an easy place in my esteem. He was in the insurance business and at the age of twenty-five had an office of his own. Having lived always in the city, he had an almost fervent regard for rural life and had hired the horse and buggy from a livery stable in Everett in order to indulge his longing for country pastimes. Mattie, as unaccustomed to beaux as Fred was to horses, fairly glowed in his presence. I usually relinquished Mr. Perkins to Fred and Mattie, since they met but once a week, so Mary remained near to me and Mr. Griffin, with whom I became increasingly intimate. Anne seldom joined us because she was taking painting lessons and used to paint in her room until dark, making imaginary seascapes which she composed from those her teacher had hung in his studio.

Mr. Perkins and I both knew we were welcome, that

in a way we had brought Mr. Griffin to a better enjoyment of life. In the days of his first wife, Ellen, Mr. Perkins told me, Mr. Griffin had entertained a great deal but mostly the Hoags and their friends, since they were near at hand and Elijah's boyhood friends were either at sea or living on Cape Ann. Ellen Griffin had been a fine woman, Mr. Perkins said, and as I looked more closely at her portrait, which first I had found determined and forbidding, I saw there also the qualities Mr. Perkins had described, those of a well-bred hostess and a conscientious mother, accustomed to wealth and to considering above all things the welfare of her children. She had died, I found out at last, of heart disease, suddenly, in the night, when Mattie was ten years old.

Several times I asked discreetly about the second wife, Mary Tarr Griffin, but either we were interrupted or Mr. Perkins was not in a talking mood. Consequently, it was some time before he finally told me what he knew of the story. Nobody but Mr. Griffin himself knew all the details and these he had never disclosed, I am sure. Mary Tarr, it seemed, had been his boyhood sweetheart until some quarrel had estranged them just before Elijah left school. She had lived with her old mother, an eccentric woman, in Rockport, during the years Mr. Griffin was building up his business and raising his family. Her neighbors had considered her mannish and peculiar. Six weeks after Ellen Griffin had died, Elijah had gone to Rockport to see his sister there who was laid up with rheumatism. Perhaps he had the idea of seeing Mary Tarr, Mr. Perkins said, perhaps not. But two days after he arrived, he and Mary were married by a justice of the peace and went back to Eastford together. The Hoags raised an awful row and cut Elijah dead.

"Mary was a handsome woman," Mr. Perkins said, wistfully. "Strong and free in her movements. But she was going on forty years old when she was married and the year after she died in childbirth. She had such a frightful time that people talked about it for years and the language she used when she was dying dumbfounded the neighbors who had come in to help. I heard about her death and went out to the funeral. That was how I got in touch with Lije again."

For fifteen years, then, Mr. Griffin had been a widower. An echo of the gossip which had attended his second marriage had been revived when he had dedicated the town library to his second wife.

Whenever I entered the house, after Mr. Perkins had told me these particulars, I was aware of the cross-currents of personality which its two mistresses had set up there. The living Mary was maturing rapidly. If she had put up her hair and let down her skirts she could have passed for a full grown woman and her resemblance to her mother must have been the more striking since Mary Tarr in her day had flatly refused to wear corsets, a bustle or pads in her hair, all of which had since dropped out of fashion. I believed that Mattie, fat and good-natured, had never much resented the existence of her youngest sister but I saw signs of hostility always in Anne and Joe. Charley spent his time in the stable. He would have liked to sleep there.

I was glad for Mr. Griffin that the children had reached an age where they could look out for themselves a bit. He had worked hard and had prospered steadily since the death of Mary Tarr but I am sure he had considered for years that his active life had ended then. The shock to him had been so great that he had never fully recovered

from it. I was convinced by the lines in his face that he had been haunted many times by the thought that it might have been his fault, that Mary, perhaps, had been punished for his sin in following that single time his inclinations blindly. My sympathy for him was as keen as if his misfortunes had happened the day before and so I enjoyed every sign that his responsibilities were lightening and that he was on the verge of achieving resignation.

Early in the spring Mr. Perkins was called to Washington. Another question about fisheries control had arisen and he was the recognized legal authority on the subject. He had seen the fight coming for some time and had discussed the situation with me many times; and his own position in the matter had only recently crystallized in his mind. As a general principle, he was opposed to the extension of the powers of the Federal government, and especially hostile to the creation of bureaux and commissions in which were mingled all the powers of legislative, executive and judiciary and which came into existence usually by virtue of statutes so loosely drawn that for years not even the commissioners themselves knew the limits of their jurisdiction. Still, the fisheries belonged especially to all the people and not even the coastal states had a monopoly of interest in them. Interstate rivers were being polluted by the waste from factories, lobsters were becoming scarce, oyster beds were being exhausted, dogfish were allowed to rot upon the shores. There was a nation-wide prejudice against mussels; the fish dealers of certain cities, San Francisco was a notorious example, by secret agreements kept prices unreasonably high and threw back into the ocean tons of fish which should be used for food. Many men familiar with the situation and anxious to remedy it believed that jurisdiction over tidal waters, at least, should

be taken from the various states and vested in a Federal board. Mr. Perkins, despite his reluctance to centralize more power in Washington, had taken this view and had been retained by a group of powerful interests to attend the hearings, draft a bill to submit to the Congressional committee and get such support as he could from State legislatures.

It was not without reluctance that Mr. Perkins took up the task, yet he did so with enthusiasm, for since his early connection with fishermen and their problems he had never ceased to follow each development of the industry and had been in touch with its leaders continually. At Miss Zinc's insistence, he bought a new felt hat but it looked so queer to him when he saw it in the mirror that he ended by leaving it at home and wearing the one he was accustomed to.

"Take good care of the office, and remember me to Elijah," he said as he departed. "If things get too hot I may send for you."

"I continued to go to Eastford every Sunday and it was wonderful to see the whole place come to life as the sunshine and showers softened the loam and started the buds. I saw a week's accumulated signs of spring each time I approached the estate. Melzer had plowed a large section of the garden and the cows were driven out to the pasture where the grass was almost as green as the lawn. Mr. Perkins' wit was missed very much at the table but Fred Atwell, while he demurred at asking the blessing, was a good talker. He was interested in all the news from Washington, where the lobstermen were putting up a terrific protest against Federal licensing. In fact, Fred was interested in all public questions and had presented to the Massachusetts legislature against the advice of all his associ-

ates a bill to separate life from endowment insurance. The House had thrown out his measure on the second reading but he was planning to introduce it again another year and talked volubly about its merits. For my own part, I was too much stirred by the spring to think very long about legislative disputes.

One thing which helped to atone for Mr. Perkins' absence was the fact that at last I persuaded Mary to play upon the organ. Fred and Mattie were out of doors, so only Mr. Griffin and I were there to hear. We sat in the enormous parlor, upon the Louis XIV chairs, while Mary adjusted the stops and made ready to begin. I was pleased that she took all the music down from the rack and played from memory. Before the first measure was over I recognized the Prelude in E-minor of Chopin, the one in which the melody is simple and lofty and sustained, holding its level as the chords drift inevitably down. She had arranged the two manuals so that there was just the right difference between them and the song when it was drawn down into the final resolving chords seemed to go out of hearing rather than to cease entirely. She played it well, and when I thanked her she looked at me quickly and said, as though astonished:

"Why, you really like it, don't you," and her eyes were misty just an instant, from the pleasure of sharing my feelings. The only thing which was a trifle incongruous was the sight of Charley, sitting impatiently on a stool and waiting for the signal to begin pumping again. To him one piece was just like another, except for the length. He liked the prelude because it was soon over and he could go on with the next. Mr. Griffin, however, was noticeably happy. He had listened to Mary practicing but my sincere praise of her interpretation had convinced him that at last

there was a musician in the family and the excellence of his product could be understood at home.

The music put him in a confidential frame of mind, so he took me out on the porch and for the first time consulted me directly about one of his problems. Charley wanted to leave school. He hated books and figures and the inside of brick buildings. He had always been the largest and dullest member of the class, sitting at desks which had been brought from higher grades in order that he might have room for his knees, being humiliated constantly by younger boys and girls who could answer the questions which baffled him — a trial to the patient teachers and the butt of ill-tempered ones. He had been promoted only because he did not improve and had been held back in each successive grade. Mr. Griffin did not think that Charley was stupid, because the boy was handy with the stock and did a man's work in the garden. He had built up a milk route which he ran independently and he took good care of his money. Giving advice was new to me but I could readily understand by Mr. Griffin's presentation of the case that he was sure Charley was meant to be a farmer and needed no more learning than he could acquire from Melzer. In those days a farmer did not have to be a chemist and an expert accountant. I had hated school so heartily myself that I did not hesitate in helping to rescue Charley from perpetual parsing of sentences and memorizing the capitals of states. I was pleased that I had been consulted because it earned me the boy's regard. His father called him in from the stable again and told him we had decided he might as well give his time to the garden and his milk route and I sensed from Charley's enthusiasm that his feeling for spring and the earth's mysterious awakening was quite as deep as mine.

Meanwhile the time in the office dragged. Mr. Perkins was so much a part of the place that without him the books and the gravestones lost their significance and were simply dreary. The only day I really enjoyed was a Monday on which, early in the afternoon, the client known as Lottie, Lottie Bacon her name was, called to see Mr. Perkins and disappointed at finding him away draped her angular figure across the back of one of the chairs, sitting on the edge as if it were a side saddle, and asked if she might smoke a cigar. She was lonesome and didn't care who knew it. At once it struck me that Lottie might enjoy the burlesque show, and the alacrity with which she accepted my invitation proved that my instinct was right. She threw the remains of her cigar into the dented brass spittoon and led me to the elevator, her hands in the side pockets of her black tailored coat.

"I've never seen a leg show," she said as we were going down, at which the elevator man, a white-haired old negro, got such a start that he stopped us between floors and could hardly get the apparatus to working again. We sat, not in the front row, for I am in some respects a coward and the prospect of walking with Lottie down the long aisle through an audience of teamsters, bus boys and jobless longshoremen was too charged with embarrassing possibilities for me to risk it. I bought all the seats in the left-hand stage box, where Lottie would be able to smoke her cigars without causing a riot and where we were near enough to touch the muscular little Italian woman in pink tights who performed most often on the end when the chorus held the stage. The climax of the show occurred just after the intermission when the heaviest girls came marching from the wings, one by one, in the uniforms of the various big league ball clubs. Lottie went wild at that, for we had

stepped into the Crawford House between the acts and had enjoyed a couple of whiskies.

The heavies representing the baseball clubs came on in such order that the Boston teams would be last, but there was applause for New York, who had bangs and a lisp, and for Philadelphia, whose front was so ample that the name looked like a pennant floating on the waves. When Boston finally appeared and the leader of the orchestra signaled for the Stars and Stripes Forever, Lottie waved her arms and cheered until the Italian girl whispered raucously to her neighbor, "Pipe Charley's aunt!"

We had supper at Frank Locke's and sat until the place was closed in one of the brass-bedecked booths downstairs beyond the bar. At two o'clock I left her at her doorway in Louisburg Square and went home feeling better than I had since Mr. Perkins had been away.

I have heard many people complain of the after-effects of drink and at times have sympathized with their point of view but very often it works the other way, inducing deep sleep, stirring all the appetites and arousing slumbering thoughts from the corners of the brain. I found it so on the morning after my excursion with Lottie and felt as if I had been on a long vacation. Not even the letter from Mr. Perkins in which he said that he would be detained much longer than he had expected depressed me. About noon Elijah Griffin came in, hoping that I would be able to tell him something more definite about Mr. Perkins' return and I showed him the letter. He seemed disappointed at first and then suggested that we go to lunch together. He had something on his mind, he said, which he had intended for a long time to take up with Asa. I saw that he could not wait any longer and intended to discuss the affair with me. At once I grew nervous for

fear that some question of law might be involved and that I should have to disclose to my friend, who had begun to show such definite signs of trusting me, that I knew as little about law as about organ pipes or gardening. I wanted Mr. Griffin to think well of me. In comparison to his solid citizenship my function in the scheme of things seemed negligible. I felt equally humble with Lottie Bacon who, in the stuffiest of surroundings, had rebelled and lived in a way which pleased her. I admire what is known as character, but I am afraid I don't understand it very well. It is one of life's mysteries to me, this gesture of a mortal standing up for this and that and walking in square-cut pathways. If I had wanted to be a woman as badly as Lottie wished to be a man, I should have whined the whole of my life. And if I had had to see the woman I had always wanted die in agony with shrieks and curses after I had held her in my arms, I should have burned my factory and let my children starve. I am not built to withstand adversity.

AT lunch that day Mr. Griffin told me of his plan, the details of which he had worked out in the evenings of the past fifteen years as he had smoked his Havana cigars or waited in the living room for bedtime. Up to the time Anne had entered high school he had sat up each night until the children were in bed, but when Mattie was old enough to take charge of the house and Joe began staying out till midnight Mr. Griffin had given up waiting for them to retire and had spent his evenings in his chamber or the upstairs sitting room where he was neither disturbed nor in the way. He knew that they needed a mother's care but there was nothing he could do about it and they made few demands upon him.

As he talked, my admiration for him increased, for I felt the soundness of his sense of values and the patience with which he had waited for his decisions to take shape. His mind worked slowly, he had little intellectual curiosity, but in the same way he had built up a successful business he had made provision for the final and most tranquil period of his life and in doing so had taken care that his children should have the opportunity to do what was best suited to them. His project was so logical and each of the children's characteristics had been so wisely taken into con-

sideration that it seemed as if I had always expected some such thing to happen.

He did not intend, he told me, to come riding into Boston every day until he had one foot in the grave. Joe would graduate from high school in June and in July would start in as office boy in the factory, moving up through each department as fast as he had learned the work, and by the time the girls were married he would be able to take charge. Joe was shrewd and his teachers had found him intelligent, although he was so close-mouthed that he did not impress a stranger at first. Mr. Griffin said he had been afraid his older son had a streak of meanness in his character but after watching him had attributed it to the fact that he had no interests around the place at Eastford and had been so very thin and long-legged when he was growing up that his self-consciousness had made him sul-
len. A chance to learn the business which would eventually belong to him would develop Joe's mind, his father said, and the fact that he would meet so many men would make it easier for him to mix with people. Mr. Griffin was much more eager and nervous than usual, for the time had come when he must act. I did not understand at first why he had been unable to wait for Mr. Perkins or what legal considerations were involved, but he said that Mattie and Fred were to be married early in September and that the first step in his project must be taken right away.

Charley, who already had charge of the stock and garden, would inherit the house, Mr. Griffin said. That was natural enough. But he hoped that Charley would marry some girl who was accustomed to fine things and who would be able to take the place of the hostesses who had made the house famous throughout the valley in the days gone by. He did not mention Captain Tewksbury's daughter, who

was then in a finishing school, but I assumed that he and his partner had hoped these young people might see the advantages of getting together. I had met the Captain and his daughter when the former had returned from a recent voyage. They had joined us one Sunday at Eastford and the girl had seemed healthy and capable and not so polished that she could not ride a draft horse bareback when Charley led the Percherons around the yard for exercise.

The lane which ran eastward from the main driveway divided the eastern half of the property almost equally. Mr. Griffin wanted to give Mattie the southern quarter and to reserve the northern lot for Anne when it was time for her to marry. I noticed that he always spoke with reluctance about the possibility of Mary's taking a husband. She was still such a child that he expected she would live in the house with him for a while before Charley married Beatrice Tewksbury. But when Mary did want a home of her own, she was to have the quarter south of the house and adjacent to Mattie's land. It would mean that a part of the orchard would have to be sacrificed but there was always more fruit than Charley knew what to do with.

How clearly I saw it all, as Mr. Griffin explained it to me. The family and the grounds intact, with only the addition of two more houses for which there was ample space, the daughters independent of one another but not really separated, the studious son with a large and thriving business to develop, the farmer boy with fertile acres and a college wife to manage the ancestral home. What pleased me most was the prospect of a pleasant old age for Mr. Griffin. I do not know why I always thought of him as older than he was, for his hair was as dark as ever and he stepped along with a quick nervous pace which contrasted with the deliberate mind he had. He actually was

overcoming his shyness, for I noticed in his orders to the waiters and his bearing toward strangers not self-assertion but increasing confidence. His moods, when I observed them carefully, seemed to alternate between confidence and timidity. When he let himself go, he was genial and enthusiastic and then suddenly he would be taken aback by the sound of his own words and would seem quite helpless for a moment, almost like Mattie when she was startled into blushing. It was uncanny to me how Elijah Griffin's separate characteristics had been parceled out among the boys and girls, in all sorts of combinations with the traits of Ellen Hoag and Mary Tarr. It made me think of a wax museum.

But Mr. Griffin was to have a tranquil old age. Few men had earned it harder. And why should not that time of life be the best, I reflected. Perhaps the mind is more serene when the sense of struggle is absent, when the passions have been cooled and have faded like the sunset. It might be, under certain circumstances, more satisfactory to watch a group of children rehearse one's habits and experiences in separate booths, like a fair consisting of one's own masks and costumes and properties. I could not help but be grateful for the chance to follow the process from the sidelines, without having had to suffer or to worry or to see the love of my life snuffed out by death.

As I thought about what he had told me, I was more concerned for the land than I was for Mattie and Anne. I suggested that he might have it held in trust for them, or at least make a provision that they could not sell it, so that the estate should not be divided up among strangers, but he was firm in insisting upon an outright gift.

"I do not wish to restrict them in any way," he said. "Every one has a right to manage his own affairs."

I saw that he was in earnest. The question of free will had never entered his mind. He did not wish to meddle in the lives of his offspring, and neither did he expect them to interfere in the disposition of his property. He could only, according to his conscience, give them what he thought they ought to have and hope that he had judged them rightly. His hesitation about beginning showed me that he was a little anxious about his estimate of them. He scrutinized my expression as I was listening to his theory about Joe, for example, but as reluctant as he was to influence his children, I was even more so about influencing him. Influencing, I am convinced, is the moot sin against the Holy Ghost.

I understood without his saying so specifically that he had not intended to unfold his whole plan to them at once. Mattie's dowry was the initial step and after that he would proceed with the next succeeding problem. His own dream of liberation from the factory would be some years in materializing.

"Have you mentioned this matter to Fred?" I inquired.

"Not yet," he said, and I could see that I had touched upon a troublesome point. Once the subject had been opened, Mr. Griffin discussed it with me quite candidly. Fred had made a brilliant beginning in the insurance business, he was sure, but except for assuring Mr. Griffin that he was able to support his daughter, he had not disclosed the state of his finances. The cost of building had increased considerably in the previous five years and Mr. Griffin was afraid that the initial outlay in putting up the proper kind of residence might deter Fred from settling at once on the southeast quarter of the estate. Besides, Fred had always lived right in the city. Would he be content to spend his time in Eastford?

From the way I had heard Fred Atwell extoll the place, I was almost sure he would jump at the chance to live there. He had theories about living on the land and, in spite of Mattie's blushes, had spoken vehemently at table against the way in which the good old American stock was being edged out of its inheritance because of the diminishing size of the families.

"Any woman who doesn't want children has no business getting married," he had declared.

Concerning Fred's finances, I was less sanguine. He had expensive habits, for a young man: smoked the finest cigars, wore clothes which were tailored by Londoners and the jocular eye with which he scanned the person of each attractive woman who came within his range of vision faintly suggested to me that his life in the city had never been a really dull one. I did not have the slightest suspicion that he intended to sponge on his father-in-law but Fred was a natural optimist and enthusiast and was not likely to make it appear that his situation was worse than it was. Expectations, with Fred, were much like capital, I thought, and I wondered how much of this Mr. Griffin had in his mind. He had seemed pleased from the first that Fred was paying court to Mattie but I believe this was due to the indolent warmth with which Mattie had responded to his attentions. She was like the earth itself, round, sure of its orbit, and receptive to the sun. She was a modern Ceres, ready to bring forth fruit.

I could not, of course, overlook the capriciousness of a fate which had brought two such people together but Fred, who was such a fancier of handsome women, admired unmistakably that buxom, inexperienced girl who was neither of the city nor the country, neither a yokel nor an aristocrat. The aristocratic strain of the Hoags was most plainly

evident in Anne, who was haughty and tall and whose figure, if it had been supplemented with a part of Mattie's plumpness, would have been much more regal than it was. Anne's narrow chest and weak voice were constant sources of worry to her father, but she herself troubled very little about them.

"I had hoped Asa would sound out Fred," Mr. Griffin said. "If he hasn't the necessary cash I could lend it to him or take a mortgage on the house. I don't want to give it to Mattie outright because I can never be sure what is going to happen and I should not like to give one daughter more than I can give her sisters later."

The perspiration stood out on Mr. Griffin's brow, for the act of being thanked for things was always painful to him and he dreaded facing his son-in-law with a most magnificent gift and an offer of extensive credit. In this case, there was too much at stake. A refusal would have undermined his plan at the outset.

"Would you like to have me discuss it with him?" I asked hastily, to relieve his mind. No sooner had I uttered the words than I was sorry, for their implication certainly verged upon meddling. Still I knew that he had hoped I would act in Mr. Perkins' stead, at least until Asa should return. Mr. Griffin took our partnership at its face value. That is, he saw my name upon the office door, a formality Mr. Perkins had insisted upon in a jocular way, and had heard Asa refer to me as his associate a hundred times. I had never told Mr. Griffin that instead of reading Marshall I had been enjoying Aristophanes. He would not have known the difference anyway.

FRED ATWELL had chosen a line of business particularly well suited to his gifts, for since insurance policies are so much alike and the standard companies so well established, an agent who can make friends readily, who is not overanxious or embittered when a competitor gets the best of him, is likely to find a profitable clientele. His office was on Federal street, one of the old-fashioned kind where men kept their hats on even when they were seated and the desks were all in one large room, just above the level of the sidewalk. He greeted me cordially, not stopping to inquire whether I intended making one of those gruesome wagers on the length of my life (which God forbid that I ever should do) and seemed to have both time and inclination for a talk.

There used to be a fine little place behind the post office called Johnston's, where ale was kept in barrels on their sides at an even temperature for about six weeks before it was served, so that the Bass or Burton flowed into the glass from the tap without a trace of foam and just cool enough to be most palatable. Fred seldom drank, but a large part of his business was transacted at this quiet bar or in the clean and spacious room adjacent, where chairs and tables were provided.

I was so awkward in beginning that Fred was well aware

something important was in the wind. It had been impossible for me to decide how to approach him, whether to adopt the attitude of a casual friend of the family or to assume a more professional air. I certainly did not want him to think I was curious about his affairs or enjoyed the office of go-between. He was so near my own age that I had no advantage on that score. I ended up by coming right out with the story and was immediately reassured that he would take no offense.

"Asa Perkins is Mr. Griffin's lawyer, as you know. Has been for years," I said. "Mr. Griffin is disappointed that Asa has been detained at Washington and in the meantime has asked me to do a little routine work for him. The whole thing in a nutshell is this: He loves the place at Eastford and wants his children to enjoy it with him. You know how bashful he is, especially when he is doing somebody a favor. Well, he wants to give Mattie a quarter of his land so that if she should want to live on it, she could remain where she has been brought up and still have a home of her own."

"That's great," said Fred after a moment's hesitation. "Mr. Griffin is the salt of the earth."

Already Fred was making swift plans, but I could see from his hesitation about committing himself that some difficulty was on his mind. I guessed that it had to do with finances and went hurriedly on.

"In case you should want to stay in Eastford," I said, "Mr. Griffin suggested that if your business required your ready cash... (I could see Fred's face brightening)... he would be glad to loan you the money for building, in strict confidence, of course, or to take a mortgage on the house which you could pay off at your leisure."

"He's a great old sport," said Fred.

"He's got a level head," I rejoined, quite startled by a sudden vision of my old friend in a checkered suit with a huge diamond stickpin. But Fred had intended no disrespect. He admired his prospective father-in-law tremendously and was much more at ease in accepting the gift than the donor or his agent had been in offering it. He ordered another drink for me, as the only means at hand for showing his appreciation.

I envied Fred his zest for life. His voice was deep and hearty and he wore his clothes so well that their elegance was never offensive. He wanted sincerely just such a firm foothold as Mr. Griffin was offering him, and a family of his own for which he could plan a magnificent future. I believed he would be a conscientious and considerate husband, not in the sense of restricting his admiration for the opposite sex, but in appreciating Mattie's maternal qualities and giving her the fullest opportunities for exercising them. And, too, I was elated at my own success in helping Mr. Griffin to get his project under way. The first step seemed sure to meet Atwell's coöperation.

"Has he spoken of this to Mattie yet?" Fred asked.

"No, he hasn't said a word to any one but me," I replied.

"He doesn't waste any words," Fred said, and sipped at his glass of ale. A man like Fred, whose imagination is always alert, needs very little stimulant.

I called on Mr. Griffin the next day at the factory on Hanover street to tell him how pleased his son-in-law had been and advised Fred to wait until Sunday before he thanked Mr. Griffin in person. Griffin and Tewksbury had another more spacious plant in Cambridge just across the river but their original place of business they still maintained in Boston, where the records were kept and organs were received to be repaired. The confidential clerk and

jack-of-all trades, Erothius Randall, was an old one-legged sailor who in the course of one of his voyages with Captain Tewksbury had got afoul of a kink in a tow rope and had had his foot sheared off when the rope was pulled taut. He climbed around the counters and shelves like a monkey, raising himself by means of his powerful arms and stamping across the boards with his peg leg as if he were still on the deck of a ship. The storehouse and repair room had a bizarre effect with queer gasps and wheezes issuing from unexpected corners as defective keys or stops were being tried and now and then a clear, cool tone came through the dimness of the loft to indicate that some ailing instrument had been set right by an expert hand. The names of the stops were like a galaxy of Italian maidens: Clarabella, Viola Dolce, and Dulciana. I wished that I understood them, as Mary or Heinrich Stadler, the foreman, did, so that I might produce the sound of a *hautbois* or a chorus of angels by design and not depend so much upon pure hazard. While Mr. Griffin was showing me the grains of the wood and the designs his men had cut out with a scroll saw, I pressed upon the pedals with one foot and listened for the respiration of the bellows or leaks like the squeaking of mice or crickets. What a marvelous way to spend one's time, I thought, pushing keys and hearing noises.

Mr. Griffin's desk was more orderly than that of Mr. Perkins but had a similar array of pigeonholes in which were lurking memoranda or scraps of used envelopes he had saved to jot figures or addresses upon. Nothing suggested the hustle and confusion I had associated in mind with business and I realized that Mr. Griffin's relation to his customers was that of a benefactor who offered the best that skill and experience could provide for a price which was fully represented in the value of the instrument. I could

not imagine Mr. Griffin forcing a sale or misrepresenting his goods. The smell of sawdust and pungent mahogany pervaded the building, of which the lower floor consisted of offices Mr. Griffin had leased. In a zinc-lined fireproof cabinet were kept the oils and inflammable substances used for lubrication or polishing, and rolls of felt and odd bits of carpet for the pedals were stacked on the benches and counters. It did not seem to me that Joe was in any way getting the worst of the deal in relinquishing the stables and the gardens to Charley. Already I had begun to think of the boys in terms of Mr. Griffin's ideas.

The next thing to do, now that Fred had acquiesced, was to survey the property at Eastford and fix the boundaries between the parent estate and its first subdivision, so Mr. Griffin engaged a surveyor to go to Eastford the next afternoon and asked if I could be there. We took the noon train direct to Eastford and as we walked through the square, past the blacksmith shop, the dry goods store and the livery stable, and turned into the long lane which led straight from the Congregational Church to the driveway it seemed to me as if I had never really seen the place before. Everything was at its best when the leaves were out. The shadows of twin sassafras trees were folded upward by the eastern face of the huge white house and the odor of the giant Balm of Gilead which grew in the center of the lawn drifted halfway to meet us. The Balm of Gilead was in blossom, as were the linden trees on Lynn street and the maples which lined the road at the foot of the hills. Melzer had laid bare a tremendous oblong of rich black soil, reaching from the fern bed on the dark side of the house to the street on which the car tracks were laid. All the blinds on the sunny side had been thrown open and touched the white clapboards gently with their dim violet ladders so

that the colors vibrated in the soft spring air. The orchard was in blossom, too, with rows of white pear blossoms, and salmon colored peach buds. The gnarled apple trees were so loaded down with blossoms that they looked as if they had been called into being in one instant, fully grown and never to be altered. I recalled with astonishment that on my first visit I could hardly tell the trees apart. Just then I thought that Charley was the luckiest boy in the world, for whatever his sisters and their husbands did with the fields of buttercups, dandelions and daisies into which they were about to be transferred, the handicap of two centuries and a half of boughs, vines and foliage would always be maintained by the western half of the property and would belong to the old white house.

I lunched with Mr. Griffin, the others having had their meal at the usual hour, and I noticed he made no move to ask a blessing. It was a matter of habit with him, a prayer in the evening when the family gathered together, an informal approach to the food at noon, as though it were useless to pray until the day's work was over. Mr. Griffin was devout, but his feeling about prayer was similar to that of the ancient Pharisees, who must have counted some splendid men among them. I could not imagine Mr. Griffin on his knees in his chamber, talking with God. He would have been self-conscious in his night-shirt and quite at a loss for words. A prayer to him was an open confession of faith, an example to the children. He did it in the presence of them all because there it was so difficult and although he dreaded unpleasant duties he was obliged to carry them through.

"Next month there will be lilacs and honeysuckle," he said.

The surveyor and his rodman drove in at two o'clock

while we were sitting on the porch smoking in the sunshine. Melzer's daughter was sitting on the chopping block near the henyard scrubbing the chairs and the settees which were taken from the loft and placed under the trees and around the lawn in summertime. She called to her father, who was plowing, to come and take care of the team for dressed as she was she did not like to go near so many strangers. We followed the surveyors northward along the edge of the plowed area of the cornfield, to Elm street. The pasture land, between us and the hills, was deep green, kept moist by underground springs which trickled through the soil and drained into the creek. To the eastward lay the broad marsh lands which, although they were everybody's property, always appeared to be a part of the estate and gave it a vastness most unusual for a suburban residence. The marshes were covered with salt hay and sweet grass and whirling flocks of sand-peep could be seen like pepper in the distance.

Mr. Griffin explained to the surveyor, who had a map in his hand, what he wanted done. His idea was that a thirty-foot roadway should be staked out north and south, dividing the property into halves and that the eastern half should not be cut exactly in two but should have the center of the lane for the dividing line between the lots intended for Mattie and Anne, respectively. In that way the trees along the lane, one hundred years old, need never be disturbed. The north and south roadway was not to be constructed but Mr. Griffin wanted a double row of trees set out at once so they would be ready if it ever seemed advisable to connect Elm street with Lynn street through the property. Mattie's house, if it were situated just south of the lane, would command the woods and the marsh without cutting off the view from the windows of the old house. Mr. Griffin

assumed that the new building would face north, so as not to turn its back completely on the parent establishment. I did not mind so much when the surveyor set up his transit but when the rodman actually began driving stakes into the earth, one hundred feet apart, drawing an unmistakable line across the fairest acres I had ever seen, it affected me weirdly. To Mr. Griffin, however, it meant no desecration. He was happy to witness the first tangible evidence that his dream was practicable and would develop bit by bit as he had hoped. The old corners were marked with granite posts sunk down in the earth so the surveyor had little difficulty in finding his point of departure. Before sunset he had staked out the imaginary roadway and had located the center line of the lane all the way from the driveway to the church property. He said he would plot up the survey, make a new map and send me a set of blueprints at once for the deed. The deed was very much on my mind and I was hoping Mr. Perkins would settle up the fisheries dispute in time to draw it up, for while I was fairly familiar with the laws of ancient Rome and with the rules of combat of the Icelanders, I had never seen the text of the Massachusetts acts and resolves since the day I had received my diploma and degree.

As the surveyor went through his mysterious motions, squinting through the telescope, and waving his arms to the rodman, Melzer who was plowing on the western edge of the field nearly upset himself once or twice with curiosity, but I knew he would ask Mr. Griffin no questions. The whole family had learned that Mr. Griffin did not like to be asked for things or about things and that the profitable policy to pursue was to wait until he had a moment of thoughtfulness or generosity. And so that evening I was careful not to let Mary get me out of the hearing of the

others, for she had no such regard for my privacy as she had for her father's feelings. Since she had found out that I cared for music, she seemed to consider me more understandable and less to be held in awe.

Charley had been packing pansy plants into baskets all afternoon for shipment to the Boston market. He went directly from the table to bed, since he intended to get up at four o'clock and drive to Faneuil Hall. But to satisfy the curiosity of Joe and the others, Mr. Griffin spoke of the survey at supper and let it be understood that it had to do with a double line of trees for a possible future roadway. He never would tell a lie but did not consider it necessary to come out with all the facts he knew upon a given subject. I noticed he was very careful not to let Mattie suspect that the survey had anything to do with her and she was not at all curious about the strangers' activities. She had looked from the window that afternoon, had seen that her father was with the surveyors and promptly had decided that everything must be all right as long as he knew about it. But I got an uncomfortable feeling of hostility from Anne and Joe. Later I convinced myself that I had imagined it, but it surely seemed to me at supper that night as if they were secretly resenting my increasing intimacy with their father.

The air was mild and the fragrance of the Balm of Gilead and the fruit trees' bloom mingled with the smoke from our cigars and Mary, at her father's request, piled up chords one upon another in the recesses of the darkened parlor without lighting the lamps to attract the insects. The task of breaking the news to Mattie now would naturally fall to Fred, who was expected on Sunday, and Mr. Griffin relaxed into complete enjoyment of the quiet hour which preceded my departure and his own retiring to bed.

OLD records have an odd effect upon me, and as I traced back the title of Elijah Griffin's land through the years of American independence to Colonial days, when Josiah Hoag had purchased the property from the Plymouth Company to which it had come by grant from the King, I was intrigued by the quiet history of that valley and the relics of its development which were preserved in Eastford. The deed of sale by which the ownership had passed to Mr. Griffin was dated 1870, a year which I had associated almost exclusively with the Franco-Prussian war. Previously to that date, it had been handed down by a series of bequests to Ebenezer Hoag. I was curious to know more about the slopes and hills with which I was becoming involved, so I took Mr. Perkins' card to the Athenæum and sought out such books and documents as had to do with the Mystic valley. I was relieved to learn that the land had not been stolen from the Indians, as had all the countryside surrounding. The Indians had died of their own accord, in some peculiar epidemic, before the first white settlers arrived.

Josiah Hoag had landed at Salem in 1629 and had found that town in a deplorable state. The colonists were dying, as the Indians had before them, and the ledges of rock were so near to the surface of the ground that raising crops

was almost impossible. The harbor was commodious and beautiful, but the new arrivals believed there were others just as good. A company of them, including Josiah, set out on horseback and within ten miles of the settlement where Pilgrims were starving and sick, found the sheltered, fertile valley to which I journeyed every Sunday. The Mystick Plantation, as it was called, had no such hardships as were current at Salem. The settlers prospered and grew rich and seemed to have less trouble with the King than any of their neighbors did. I learned, although I did not communicate this fact to Mr. Griffin or to Fred, who was intensely patriotic, that the Hoags were famous as Tories in their day and had headed the list of signers of a complaint that General Washington's soldiers were cutting down and mutilating their trees to feed revolutionary camp-fires.

The thing which had impressed me most, in reviewing the records of sales, was the casual way in which hundreds of precious articles were lumped in one stiff clause and shifted owners without even being listed. When I thought of the carved sideboard, the Sheraton bureaux, the faïence and porcelain vases, the MacIntire eagle which spread its wings above the barn door, the Brussels carpets and Gobelins tapestries of the parlor, the Windsor chairs and hooked rugs of the living room, the gilded Louis XIV sofa in the upper hall, the ship models and portraits and discarded wooden cradles and the family Bible, I wondered if Mr. Griffin had the least idea of their value in cash or their historical significance and whether in tossing them all over to Charley, who had to be coerced into wearing a white collar on Sunday, he realized that he might be casting antimacassars and framed wax flowers to a boy who knew much more about swine. Anne, although I sus-

pected her of disliking me, showed signs of intelligent attachment to the things her mother's family had collected, and for this I gave her credit. I wished Mr. Perkins would return, for so many legal and ethical questions had already cropped up that I was on the point of consulting a regular lawyer. There were at least a hundred attorneys within a block of our office. Mr. Griffin had wanted to make a fair distribution of his goods. No doubt he also had desired to keep the furnishings intact. It was not for me to assume he had overlooked important items. And as I recalled that he had set his mind upon Beatrice Tewksbury as the future mistress of the house I concluded he must realize what he was doing. After all, the antiques had no cash value unless they were to be sold and no one expected Charley or his future wife would auction off the heirlooms.

I had never cared much for property, but as I thought of the splendid accumulation of articles in Mr. Griffin's home I gained respect for the acquisitive instinct. From an old account of a French vessel bound for Florida having been seized by an English man-of-war, the captain of which sold the loot in Boston in 1743, I suspected that Josiah Hoag, third, had come by the Louis XIV parlor set in that way. But each ornament or piece of furniture, whether of foreign or local origin, was perfect of its kind. Their arrangement was haphazard, but had the sanction of long and constant usage. It occurred to me that I might suggest a complete inventory of Mr. Griffin's possessions, preparatory to making out the will, but this would have been an endless task and would have required a staff of expert appraisers to estimate the value of the household goods and bookkeepers to audit the accounts of the factory. The principal asset there was good will, which no one could put in terms of money. Real estate values were changing rapidly throughout the suburbs

of Boston. A figure based upon the current year's prices would be far too small five years hence. Except for the cash in the bank and the securities Mr. Perkins handled for him, Mr. Griffin did not really know the extent of his wealth.

My own conjectures and researches led me into such complicated paths that I was left with stronger admiration for the simplicity of Mr. Griffin's proposed distribution. Whose affair was it if he chose to divide his assets so that they might be used to the best advantage, without lumping everything and dealing out five equal shares? I decided to use his own words in the text of the will, if ill luck kept Mr. Perkins in Washington indefinitely.

On Sunday Fred appeared at Eastford with a sheaf of plans and catalogues under his arms. He had been so much elated by the news that he was to have such a splendid parcel of land that he had by force of his enthusiasm got the signatures of three or four good insurance customers and had decided to spend his commissions on furniture. The house should have all the modern conveniences, he said, and especially hardwood floors. He showed me pictures of various kinds of inlaid floors in the catalogues and spent the afternoon with Mattie turning the pages eagerly, convincing her easily of the soundness of his ideas. He thanked Mr. Griffin with gusto and sincerity.

"The honor of having you for the next door neighbor would have been enough to make me settle here," he said. "All my life I have been too far from the land."

After all, I thought to myself, it is possible to see the State House dome from the hill just north of the place. He talked as if he were crossing the prairies in a covered wagon. But I liked to hear him talk extravagantly. His phrases expressed the intensity of his feeling, and I appre-

ciated them as figures of speech. Besides the hardwood floors, he had set his heart on having a dumbwaiter, a screened porch and a concrete cellar.

The other members of the family seemed glad that Mattie was to live across the imaginary street, but I doubt if any of them had expected she would go far away. Fred held conferences with the local builder, had plans drawn up to include the features which seemed so important to him, and within a week the workmen had started digging the foundation. I disliked the sight of that great square hole in the ground, with mounds of earth like those around a freshly dug grave, more than I had deplored the line of stakes by which the surveyor had split the property in halves. And I was no better pleased when the joists were set in place and upright timbers pointed raggedly toward the sky. At Fred's suggestion I told Mr. Griffin he would be glad to accept a loan for the building, to be converted into a mortgage as soon as the new house was ready. Since the house was to have hardwood floors it would be necessary to cover them with rugs instead of carpets and Fred became convinced that Oriental rugs were not only the best to lay upon the floor but were excellent investments as well. He got into the hands of a persuasive dealer and rugs became a passion with him, so much so that he almost forgot the rest of the furnishings and spent as much money for rugs alone as he had planned to put into the whole house. That was his nature, to plunge whole-heartedly into anything that attracted him.

In a month the foundation was complete and the framework sufficiently advanced so that skeletons of the various rooms were recognizable. On Sunday afternoon, instead of walking up and down the well-weeded rows of the vegetable garden or driving through the woods on the turnpike,

Mr. Griffin and I were obliged to step perilously across the two-by-fours and wade through troughs of lime in order to advise Fred where a commode had best be placed and to guess how many hours a day the nursery windows would catch the sun. On these excursions Mattie would come with us as far as the frame of the front door but she was not agile enough to risk her weight on slender timbers. As her wedding day approached she got fatter and more complaisant, content to let Fred do the planning.

To my great relief I found Mr. Perkins waiting in the office one morning when I arrived. He had come from New York on the night train which got in at seven o'clock and had tried to kill the intervening hours by a long breakfast at Durgin and Parks and a stroll around the markets. He was glad to see the office again but too restless to sit down. Whenever his routine was upset for a time it took him several days to get back into swing. The fisheries affair had been a complete fiasco, at least he said that it would be. The vote had not yet been taken. The fishermen, and particularly the lobster men, had raised an awful row and he had found himself on the opposite side from scores of his former friends and clients. The textile manufacturers, who maintained a powerful lobby, did not want to be restrained from polluting the streams. The expense of sterilizing their waste would not have been large, but the epoch of a much more stringent public control of many industries was approaching and the men with large capital were fighting off every manifestation of interference. State legislatures were reluctant to instruct their Congressmen to vote away state rights and in a majority of cases had not only failed to respond to Mr. Perkins' invitation that they join forces to create a competent Federal board but had adopted resolutions against it. The real blow had come from

the Catholic vote, he told me. The Catholic leaders had been afraid for years of a Federal board of education and had agreed to help the fishermen with the understanding that later the fishermen would support them in their struggle. I was astonished that so many interests were involved in a simple administrative question, but Mr. Perkins was not really disappointed.

"We had all the arguments, but the other side has got the votes," he said. "We'll try it again ten years from now."

In as much as the vote had not been recorded, I was equally surprised that he seemed so sure of the actual count and had not waited until the results he expected had been confirmed. He laughed when I spoke of that.

"It's easy to see that you have never mixed in politics," he said, implying by his tone that I had done wisely. "The decisions are made in the smoking room. The talk in the House and the Senate is mostly for the home folks."

He was silent a moment, then he turned to me as if an after-thought had come to him.

"I did find out a thing or two about street railways, though," he continued. "The New Haven has got its eyes on the Boston and Maine and wants to buy up all the trolley cars and steamship companies down this way, so that they can all operate in harmony. Synchronization, I believe they call it. That's the word they're passing around to the boys. The House is shy of the word 'monopoly' so they call it something else."

"My God, then street railway stocks will go up. Perhaps we've given the clients the wrong steer after all," I said, somewhat dismayed.

"I wouldn't worry too much about that," he said. "You don't know what a gang of burglars those New York bankers are, and how anxious they are to choke off New

England....But tell me what Elijah is up to. You wrote that he was making out a will. I hope he's not sick."

"He's never been feeling better," I said. I wanted to tell Mr. Perkins all about the plan and the details on which I had been occupied in his absence but I couldn't get my mind off the way he would feel when he caught sight of Fred Atwell's unfinished house which looked as if it had been left by mistake overnight on the middle of the property.

"Elijah's full of schemes," I said. "You better let him tell you himself. He doesn't have much chance to talk about them, since they are secret between him and his attorney."

Sunday noon Mr. Griffin met us at West Everett, beaming with pleasure that Mr. Perkins was back, but all he said was,

"You got here at last, did you, Asa?" And he shook hands a bit more quickly than usual as if he were ashamed of acting so effusively. We followed the usual route along the turnpike but after we had turned down the road which led to Eastford and were driving over the crest of the hill from which the town and the fields and marshlands could be seen I heard Asa draw in his breath quickly and mutter something to himself which Elijah, who was driving, did not hear. It sounded very much to me like, "Suffering Jesus Christ!"

The moment was unfortunate, and I should perhaps have spared him the shock, for the new house had just received its undercoat of paint which for some reason had to be a shade of poisonous pink and made the old white homestead and the cornfields look like a mirage.

"That's not going to be the color," I assured him. "I am certain that Fred is planning to have it painted buff and blue, like Washington's uniform."

Mr. Perkins groaned, and I had an uncomfortable feeling for a moment that he might blame me for what had occurred in his absence. As we were riding along, my spirits suddenly collapsed and it seemed to me as if I should have objected the moment Mr. Griffin suggested splitting up his estate and should have explained that inanimate articles which had remained together as long and as peacefully as had his house and stable and orchard and garden could not be put asunder without destroying their charm and existence. He, an honest manufacturer and the father of a family, had come to me for advice and I had merely said yes to everything he had proposed. In matters of taste he had always deferred to others, and my heart sank as I reflected that Mr. Perkins might have counseled that the sons and daughters find homes in some other part of Eastford, perhaps on adjacent land, and by spreading out enlarge the estate rather than chop it into portions. I recalled the English laws of succession and saw in an instant how wisely they had been formulated. I blamed myself for posing as a lawyer and for trying to apply my scattered wits to actual problems. So I did not enjoy the dinner as much as I should have enjoyed it, and entered the library apprehensively for the cigar and the conference I knew were in order.

I had not been in the library since the winter before. The portrait of Calvin, without the flames from the fireplace to make it forbidding, had blended into the wall and with the window wide open and the garden spread out before us I did not bother to read the titles of the books upon the shelves. Mr. Griffin was hesitant about beginning but when he launched into his plan and repeated his reasons for each decision and the order in which each section should fall into place I was carried away by his simple logic

and became cheerful again. My last qualm disappeared when I saw that Mr. Perkins was responding to his friend's enthusiasm. Mr. Griffin was really beginning to enjoy himself, to recapture the initiative which had made him so successful in his youth. With Mr. Perkins that outweighed all other considerations. He did not wince when Fred displayed the beginnings of his modern conveniences, nor shudder at the rigidity of the design the proportions of which were mathematically sound but had never been visualized before construction. The new house was roomy and well arranged inside and when Fred showed Mr. Perkins the Oriental rugs which he had not been able to restrain himself from purchasing two months before he would need them, my old friend's admiration was genuine and heartily expressed.

"It's too bad you can't hang them on the walls," he said to Fred. "That's the way they show to best advantage."

"Wait until you see them on my hardwood floors," Fred replied. He had planned to have paintings on the walls and was watching for a sale at which he could buy them in quantities.

Mr. Perkins and I said little on the way to Boston that evening, for neither of us had been able to clarify the contending states of our minds. He did remark, knowing that on that point we could have no disagreement, that he was thankful Elijah was going to take it easy and enjoy his place before it was too late.

MATTIE'S wedding was set for Labor Day, for Fred was anxious to have a good crowd in the church and figured that all the inhabitants of Eastford, men as well as women, could attend and mingle with the guests from outside. The summer heat had subsided and yet the fruits were still upon the trees, the pole beans and pumpkins were beginning to ripen and the second crop of hay was stacked in the fields, diffusing its fragrance everywhere. On the hills which hemmed in the town from the north the trees were waiting in full regalia for the touch of frost which would signal their display of autumn colors.

I had taken my afternoon clothes from the closet on the previous day, hoping they would not smell too strongly of mothballs, and when I called for Mr. Perkins, Eileen was panting from exertion after having fastened the stud in the front of his stand-up collar. He had become slightly more dependent upon her, I thought, since he was not forced to depend upon her solely for company. Perhaps her instinct had told her that this might happen and had prompted her to be so cordial to me from the very first. She loved to see Mr. Perkins dressed formally, and I myself was struck by the change which his best frock coat and striped trousers effected in his appearance.

"The Prince of Wales and his uncle," I heard a newsboy whisper as we entered the North Station.

"It's one of the drawbacks of democratic government," Mr. Perkins said, resuming a conversation about the fisheries. "When anybody wants anything badly enough they get it, and the public has to suffer. On the other hand, if the government tries to keep abreast of the times, private interests are able to delay the measures which pinch them and keep the laws about a generation in the rear of conditions. Thank God I've had sense enough to keep out of politics. It has been a strain at times, for I love dearly to talk."

I was content that he should prefer to talk to me rather than harangue the multitude and it seemed to me that the public was organized especially to suffer and that the best an individual could do was to keep out of it. We arrived in Eastford in time for lunch and found Mr. Griffin already dressed and waiting for us on the porch. The ceremony was to be performed at four o'clock and Fred had insisted that Mr. Perkins act as best man. To make sure that nothing should go wrong he had arranged for a rehearsal in the parlor at two, and the minister had promised to be present. Mr. Best, the minister, had dined with us all occasionally on Sunday and treated Mr. Griffin with great deference. Mary was the only person in town who could play the pipe organ and had acted as organist in the church since the time I had first induced her to play before others. She did it to please her father. As Mattie lined up beside her father and faced the imaginary pulpit in front of the organ, I was startled once again by the amazing contrast of physique and expression between her and her sister Anne. The latter, rather bored, shifted her place as she was prompted by the minister and shrugged her narrow shoul-

ders as Mattie, her face the color of a boiled lobster, tripped on her train and came close to ruining her dress. On the right hand side of the room, Fred was leading Mr. Perkins over the route that they were to follow in the church and as they passed where I was sitting, I turned my head away for fear a glance from him should make me laugh. I was really feeling hysterical. The performance did not strike me as funny, but weird in some way, and Fred was so very much in earnest that I was afraid of offending him. There had never been a bridegroom gotten up more resplendently and yet his clothes and his diamond studs just missed being vulgar, as his costumes always did. His jet black mustache and crackling eyes could stand more brilliance of attire than a young man of less striking features could hope to support. Mary had played the march from Lohengrin as the principals had strode up the room to face the minister, and had played it with a quite subdued organ. But when the last "I will" had been spoken and the minister had unofficially pronounced the parties man and wife, Mary, who had been fumbling slyly with the stops, committed the trumpet introduction to Mendelssohn and releasing every ounce of power in Mr. Griffin's prize instrument flung both hands, widely spread, upon the squealing chords of that noisy processional. I jumped six inches from my chair. Mr. Perkins lost step and all but fell flat on the floor and I saw Mary giggle. It would have been impossible to hear such a small sound in the general din. She was fond of playing musical jokes on me, but none of the others except Mr. Perkins knew what had happened. I begged her not to repeat the outburst in the church for fear that the walls, so heavily mortgaged by Mr. Griffin, might collapse as the walls of Jericho had done before a lesser blast.

Mr. Perkins was striding resolutely in the direction of

the dining room and at once I divined his errand. When I reached his side he had poured out a wine glass of whiskey from the decanter which always stood upon the sideboard and for once allowed a lapse in his exquisite politeness.

"You will pardon me for drinking first," he said, and gulped it down.

"I think I need a drop myself," I said. "How much longer have we to wait?"

"I wouldn't do this again for anything," he groaned.

"Don't forget there's Anne and Charley on the list," I said. "You can't slight them."

"I'll have another if you don't mind," he said, leaning with his elbow on the sideboard and nodding toward the decanter. Mr. Best came toddling in and we quickly hid the glasses for on the days he ate with Mr. Griffin no intoxicating liquors were served in deference to the old minister's scruples.

"It doesn't seem possible that Mattie is old enough to be married," he said. "It seems only yesterday when I christened her.

"Time like a wounded serpent," Mr. Perkins quoted, not very aptly. The double drink of whiskey had gone to his head.

"I can't get into the damn thing and that's all there is to it," I heard Charley say from an upper room.

Mary came driving furiously down the lane in the buggy with Beatrice Tewksbury. I helped them out, unloaded Beatrice's suitcase and led the horse to the barn as the girls hurried upstairs to dress. It was nearly three o'clock. When they descended the stairs I was astonished, for both of them had wound their braids of hair like crowns upon their heads and they wore identical dresses of China silk with a luster like pearl, reaching fully to their ankles. They both

were beautiful, but Beatrice's flaming red hair and intense coloring made her appearance more striking at a distance, while Mary's long curved eyelashes and delicate oval face seemed to change with all the vagaries of light. I was glad for the sake of Mattie and Anne that the younger members of the party were not to stand up with them in the church.

Mr. Griffin and Mattie stood waiting in the hall. Fred and Mr. Perkins joined them, and I saw the eyes of the bridegroom glance approvingly at the figures of the two young girls who, unlike the older sisters, were not trussed up with corsets. I am sure he thought more of Mattie as a prospective wife because she was neither lovely nor athletic. He wanted her to be content to stay at home. Anne was the last to be ready, and wore around her neck a string of pearls her mother had worn when she was married.

Melzer had been polishing up the carry-all and grooming the geldings since morning. The harness buckles shone and the horses stepped along the driveway nervously, as if they sensed that something unusual was taking place. Mr. Griffin ushered Mattie to the carriage, Mr. Perkins, Anne and Fred sat in the back seat and they all set off for the church, three hundred yards away. I was left to escort Mary and Beatrice down the long lane on foot and as we walked we saw the townspeople entering the vestry in groups and carriages driving up to the door, discharging the guests in gala attire, then rolling out back to the carriage shed and the long rail which served for a community hitching post. Both girls were self-conscious in their first long dresses and I offered an arm to each, quite gingerly, for I hardly knew how to treat them in their new rôle. Mary entered the church by the side door, in order to get to the organ loft without attracting attention, and as Beatrice and I were ushered to our seats in the section reserved for invited

guests I heard people whisper and draw in their breath at the sight of the auburn-haired beauty. While she looked as cool and unruffled as she had at the moment she had finished dressing, I felt the tingle of a sort of energy she seemed to radiate and realized that her hand upon my sleeve was trembling eagerly.

"I hope Mary doesn't blow the roof off with the exit march," I said.

"She'll be lucky if she hits the right notes," said Beatrice. "I feel as if we were all going to be held up or the church was catching fire."

I wished she had not been forced to sit so close to me, but the pew was full and she did not seem to notice. I tried to imagine I was the wooden end-piece of the pew and to count sevens rapidly to distract my attention from her pressure, and the perfume of her hair. It seemed that an interminable time had passed. I could see the back of Mary's head and noticed that she turned from time to time to find out what was the matter. The church was filled, every seat taken and people standing in the back and crowding around the swinging doors which led into the corridors. Then I heard a flurry outside and the sound of an indignant woman's voice:

"Let me in, if you please. Don't stand and block the doorway."

I could not help but turn my head, as everybody else in the church did at the same moment. An elderly woman, dressed in gray half-mourning, hobbled across the threshold, followed by another in lavender, who, although her hair was silver white, stood quite erect.

"Mrs. Bartholomew Hoag," I heard some one in front of me whisper.

"Who is the old girl?" asked Beatrice in an undertone.

"Mrs. Hoag," I whispered, more to quiet her than to impart the information which had come so recently to me.

"Why doesn't some one find us a seat," said the older woman, turning impatiently to wait for the other. She was deaf and her voice carried from one corner of the church to the other. "Where's Elijah, anyway?"

I was in a panic. Mr. Griffin, Fred, Mr. Perkins, who might have done something to relieve the situation, were in the anteroom, lining up for the march down the aisle. The minister looked between the curtains. Every second the two newcomers were progressing toward the front and not a single seat was vacant. By the time they had reached the area marked with white ribbon, I had floundered to my feet and Beatrice, furious with disappointment, rose beside me. I bowed the two strange women into the places we had vacated and they sat down with sighs of relief, without even turning to thank me. I think the woman in lavender, when she realized that Beatrice had been deprived of her place, tried to murmur an apology after us as we made our way to the back of the church and wedged ourselves into the crowd that was standing.

"I like their nerve," said Beatrice.

"Be still," I said. "Mary's going to begin."

And the opening measures of the Lohengrin march soared out from above the pulpit, trite but comforting. My throat was parched and my knees were weak with suspense and the whole church was in a state of ominous expectancy, for it was common knowledge in the town that neither Mrs. Bartholomew Hoag nor any of her relatives had spoken to Elijah Griffin since his second marriage had been announced, nearly sixteen years before. In order to reach the pulpit, Elijah would have to walk within a foot of

where his mother-in-law was sitting. I saw him falter as he approached the pew, then recover himself and continue down the aisle. On the other side of the church Fred and Mr. Perkins were proceeding in perfect alignment. The party assembled four abreast in front of the minister who raised his hand benevolently and as the music ceased, began:

"Dearly beloved."

"I can't hear a word he says," came from the direction of Mrs. Bartholomew Hoag. I reflected that Mattie must have felt obliged to invite her own grandmother, on whatever terms she might be with Mr. Griffin. The ceremony having got under way proceeded with what seemed to me a nervous rapidity. Only Fred was perfectly self-possessed and was obviously enjoying the performance. The ritual had a grave significance with him and marked his entry into Eastford as a citizen. Mattie, dressed in white and half hidden by her veil, appeared to balance the mass of her father and Mr. Perkins as well. I was still afraid Mary would turn the whole organ loose on the Mendelssohn finale but she played it in orthodox fashion and the bridal party marched out and waited to receive the well wishes of friends in the vestibule. Those who had gathered to congratulate them gave way as Mrs. Hoag and her companion came through the door. The old lady hobbled up to Elijah and extended her hand as if nothing had ever happened to estrange them. Then she turned to Fred.

"And who are you, young man?" she asked.

It was rarely Fred found himself on the defensive, but on that occasion he was frankly nonplused.

"This is Mattie's grandmother," Elijah said, beads of perspiration on his forehead. "And Mrs. Ebenezer Hoag, her aunt."

That must be the widow of the man who sold the estate, I said to myself, and was pushed gently by those behind me into a position where it seemed best to shake Fred's hand.

"Who is that with Ellen's pearls on?" Mrs. Bartholomew Hoag continued, as if the church were empty except for her relatives. "That must be Anne."

To cover his embarrassment, Mr. Griffin presented Mr. Perkins and me. Mrs. Hoag, to my great surprise, had heard of me before.

"You're the young lawyer Lottie Bacon goes to see. Her mother has spoken about you," the old lady said. Up to that moment it had never occurred to me that Lottie would have a mother, but the description of me, although a bit incomplete, was flattering enough. The old witch is omniscient, I thought. Mrs. Ebenezer Hoag was not at all blunt in her speech but took it gracefully for granted that her sister-in-law should have her way in all circumstances.

"I did not realize we were driving you from your seat," she said to me.

Just then Mary, who had known nothing of what had taken place, came in rather precipitously and found herself face to face with the woman who had snubbed her mother. I choked with dismay when I saw the quick hatred which burned in her eyes and held my breath when the elder Mrs. Hoag remarked:

"Is that the other one?"

"That's none of your business," said Mary, white with rage, and turned abruptly, almost running from the church. Mr. Griffin was gray with misery, but the old lady did not appear to be offended.

"She's got a temper, that young one," was her comment, and she hobbled down the steps to her carriage. Mr. Griffin

followed bewilderedly to invite her to the house but she declined and motioned for her companion to get into the conveyance.

"I'll come another time," she said, and her coachman drove away.

ONE afternoon, while Fred and Mattie were still away on their wedding tour, Anne saw her grandmother's carriage come rolling up the driveway. She hurried into the parlor to open the blinds. Mr. Griffin, Mr. Perkins and I were smoking in the living room and I regretfully followed my host's example by throwing away a half-smoked cigar. Mary, with whom her father had never been able to discuss the incident in the church vestibule, got up at once and left the room.

Mr. Griffin met the callers at the foot of the steps and helped his mother-in-law and Mrs. Ebenezer Hoag up the stairs and into the parlor. Mrs. Bartholomew was active, but moved with difficulty. Apparently the anger she had harbored fifteen years because Elijah had married so soon after the death of her favorite daughter, had been dissipated. As soon as the old lady got her bearings in front of the organ platform, she turned to Mr. Griffin.

"What have you done with the spinet?" she asked. She remembered the room as it had been when Mrs. Ebenezer had been hostess there.

"What's become of the little old-fashioned piano?" she persisted.

Mr. Griffin had removed it to the garret fifteen years before. As early as that he had developed a distinct dislike

for pianos, holding them to be frivolous, unsightly and empty in tone. The fact that the spinet in question was one of the first to be landed in America had never occurred to him.

"Why, I put it upstairs in the attic years ago," Mr. Griffin said, apologetically. "I suppose the strings have rusted by this time."

"It goes better with the furniture than that thing does," Mrs. Bartholomew said, making a gesture with her elbow toward the organ. "I've a feeling here that I'm in a chapel. But never mind! Sit down!"

From the outset, Mr. Perkins had a tremendous advantage with Mrs. Bartholomew. His voice, when he let it out, would pierce the old lady's deafness.

"The rest of you mumble so," she said, again and again. "Why don't you come right out with what you have to say, like Asa here."

I am sure Anne must have remembered her grandmother's visits of long ago for without prompting, after the guests had been seated a while, she excused herself and helped the housekeeper prepare tea, which had never before been served in my presence at Eastford. Since Mattie had gone away, Anne had taken her duties as hostess quite seriously. She had no gifts of conversation but she liked to be treated as mistress of the house. She had taken the place at the foot of the table which her mother had formerly occupied, in spite of the fact that Mattie, three years her senior, had never made it her habit to sit there. Her father served her first, and waited for her to rise from the table. After a little while, during which I was afraid the old lady was getting fidgety, Anne entered with a tray on which was a priceless Wedgwood pitcher and tea set. I was in terror when it came my turn to take a saucer for fear that I

should break it in my fingers or spill the tea upon the carpet. Something about Mrs. Bartholomew's presence made me fearful of all my actions. I was anxious, too, about Mary's whereabouts and felt better when I heard the voice of Beatrice Tewksbury in the hallway and thought she had mounted the stairs. If we were to be descended upon by the grandmother and aunt on Sundays, as I suspected had been the custom when Ellen was alive, I saw that Mary was to be driven away from our group.

In my moments of calm, I watched Mrs. Ebenezer and my admiration of her poise and serenity grew. She was sitting, surrounded by strangers, in what had been her home when she was a bride. Ebenezer, who after selling the property to Elijah had gone West without leaving his address, must have carried her over the threshold and from the fleeting evidence of pain I had seen upon her face when the spinet was brought into the conversation so abruptly, I decided that probably she had played upon it evenings while her husband was with convivial companions. If there were a single element I could have removed from my character, I would choose to rid myself of the faculty for responding to other people's sorrow. In the case of Mrs. Ebenezer Hoag, the twinges I felt were often accompanied by a wish that, if grief should come to me, I should be able to carry it off as well as she did. In the meantime, Mr. Perkins was in animated conversation with Mrs. Bartholomew. He not only was able to make her hear, but knew all the people from Salem and what had happened to them, so that he imparted a fund of news to the old lady who became less abrupt in her comments as the talk went on. I could not help but imagine what must have happened to Mr. Griffin if Mr. Perkins had not been on hand. He,

too, was anxious about Mary and, I am sure, was wondering how it all would end.

Having nothing whatever to occupy her mind, Mrs. Ebenezer took a fancy to Anne in the ensuing weeks and tried to give her the benefit of her social experience. On the days Anne's painting lessons took her to Medford, the girl began taking supper with her grandmother and her great-aunt by marriage, and by her devotion stirred all the old lady's dormant desires to get the Eastford property if not into her clutches, at least within range of her domination. Anne was approaching her best years, as far as looks were concerned. Her collar bones became less prominent, then faded out of sight. Her arms, which she had before kept covered, she allowed to show through lace and at last bared them in evening dress. Although slender, they were certainly not all skin and bone. She was like a tawny flower which remains unnoticed until some of its gaudy neighbors are plucked. As her looks improved she became more cordial to me, so much so that I decided I must have imagined her previous coolness.

On the day Fred and Mattie were due to return, Mr. Perkins and I went with Mr. Griffin to meet them. As the New York train nosed its way through a network of tracks, found the right one at last, and slid snorting into the South Station, one of the first passengers to get off was Fred, and as we reached his side, Mattie stepped to the platform with a sigh. She was happy to be nearing home again. Believing it would be the last time she would be able to travel unencumbered Fred had lavished every attention upon her and had shown her the sights in New York, Philadelphia and Washington. Mr. Griffin was waiting on Charles street, by the public gardens, with the carry-all. He did not like to drive the geldings through the heavy traffic for the sake of

their nerves. For his own part, he enjoyed getting them safely out of tight places. His horsemanship was the one thing in which he showed complete confidence and daring. He kissed Mattie awkwardly on one broad cheek as she embraced him. I could see no change in her appearance, except that now her static quality became her better. She entered the new house, which was not completely furnished but could readily be occupied, without a single sentimental glance at the house across the way in which she had spent her girlhood and settled placidly in the upstairs sitting room, where a comfortable rocker stood in the window commanding a view of Elm street, the cornfield and pasture, and the hills beyond. By turning at right angles she could see bits of the marsh between the branches of the trees which lined the lane. The foliage was thinning, and the woods were russet and brown.

Fred was in favor of an immediate housewarming, with a blanket invitation to all the inhabitants of the town. The crowded church, although his bride's grandmother had diverted a measure of the attention from him, had gratified an instinct he had long held in abeyance. He wanted to welcome his townfolk from the porch, with Mattie blushing nearby, and to have his neighbors admire the hardwood floors and the convenience of the dumbwaiter. He wanted music and voices and to smile when the crowd sang "For He's a Jolly Good Fellow" and "Auld Lang Syne." For once Mattie asserted herself. She wanted to get things straightened out, to have pictures on the walls and enough dishes to go around before she started entertaining on a grand scale and she was so tired of riding on trains and walking in tight shoes to look at monuments and historic spots that she planned to sit in her rocking-chair at least a week before she raised her hand. Fred agreed that she was

right. Within the walls of their home, her judgment was supreme. In outside affairs he would take the responsibility. That was the only way to get along.

At once he began to take an active interest in local affairs. The annual town meeting was held while Mattie was still recuperating from her honeymoon and although he had not established a residence in Eastford he could not resist the temptation to take the floor, in a question affecting the school hours, and to ask the indulgence of the moderator and his fellow citizens. Every one was glad enough to hear what he had to say and he proved to be an exciting speaker, for he was able to carry his audience into his own moods. He made a good impression and one of the tradesmen for whom Mr. Griffin had done many favors moved that Fred's short residence be overlooked, since he had come there to stay, and nominated him for a place on the Republican town committee when the caucus was held following the regular meeting. There were so few Democrats in Eastford that questions were discussed pretty much on their merits and without regard to party lines. Fred was flattered and pleased. The office he had accepted carried with it considerable work and no reward except the satisfaction of seeing the town go more solidly Republican than ever before and getting out a large percentage of the registered vote. He was not looking for glory as much as the sensation of being on the inside of things.

For nearly two decades, Mr. Griffin had been a member of the board of selectmen, but he invariably declined the office of chairman. It was right that he, as the largest tax payer and principal benefactor of the town, should sit on the board but he shrank from being too conspicuous and above all disliked to create the impression that he was taking advantage of his wealth to dominate public affairs. He

was pleased with Fred's earnestness and with the kind reception accorded his son-in-law by his neighbors. Mr. Perkins had not voted since he had been in Boston and I had never even registered in my life, but we listened sympathetically to Fred's talk about the party and the duties of citizenship.

Until Mattie was completely installed, she and Fred had their Sunday dinners at their father's house as before, but Anne kept her place at the foot of the table and treated her sister with the deference due a guest. Two or three evenings a week she spent at Medford Hillside and at the suggestion of Mrs. Ebenezer Hoag stopped patronizing the local dressmaker and had her clothes fitted by the woman who made Mrs. Hoag's gowns from Parisian models. Her painting was somewhat neglected, for she had learned to do the things her teacher had told her to do and was really somewhat tired of making pictures out of rocky foregrounds, sea and a cloudy sky upon which she had wiped her brush while working on the rest of the canvas. Fred, in the meantime, having been told that his housewarming must wait until the walls were covered had made the acquaintance of a painter in Boston who, instead of turning out marine views, did large pastoral landscapes with cattle and sheep profusely scattered over green fields. The grass was invariably stippled with the palette knife and the colors were laid on thickly, with a prodigal spirit which accorded with Fred's lavish taste. Not many nights passed by when Fred did not come walking down the lane with a large picture under his arm, until the parlor walls, the upstairs sitting room and the staircase were well taken care of. The cows were sienna and Chinese white and the fleece of the sheep stood out in generous relief.

"That's the way I like to see a man paint," Fred said to

me, again and again. "He lays it on as if he liked to swing the brush."

Mattie's grandmother, who called at the homestead each pleasant Sunday, welcomed her curtly upon her return. As usual, however, she gave most of her attention to Mr. Perkins and to Anne. She seldom appeared to be aware of the existence of the boys. Mary went to some remote part of the house whenever she appeared and if I could do so unnoticeably I often slipped out of the parlor and spent the tea hour with Beatrice and Mary. The northeast storms which brought the winter across the brown expanse of marsh kept us all indoors for a while. I was sorry for Mary's sake that the Hoag atmosphere was beginning to reassert itself. I knew she felt it very deeply. She was restless and moody, and resented among other things having to give up so many of the hours in which she had formerly played the organ. Since the day she had put up her hair, she had never acted quite the same as before and I thought she avoided her father, who was quite as uneasy as she was about the increasing freedom with which Mrs. Bartholomew came in upon them and spoke her mind.

The most encouraging feature of the situation was the reports which Mr. Griffin gave me of Joe's progress at the factory. It was the first real outlet for the quiet intensity of his nature and the boy had plunged into the details of his father's business, performing arduous tasks and according complete respect to Erothius Randall and Heinrich Stadler. Like his father, he was devoid of musical sense but was shrewd and quick to grasp the commercial factors involved. He had learned from the sea-faring clerk the office routine and had spent many evenings with the bookkeepers, on the last days of each month, going over the somewhat antiquated system of accounts. Every morning he sat by his

father's side in the train, reading the less conservative papers while Mr. Griffin scanned the columns of the *Advertiser*, and in the market restaurants had made the acquaintance of the younger business men in other lines of endeavor. His lanky form was filling out, as was that of his sister Anne and the resemblance between them, which had always been remarkable, seemed sure to persist. When the conversation touched upon current affairs, he joined in with Fred and Mr. Perkins occasionally and dutifully had learned to smoke his father's strong cigars. Sometimes when Fred was attending a political meeting, Joe would spend an hour with Mattie before going to bed. He lacked some of his father's sympathetic qualities, but I believed that with what he had he might well do what was expected of him.

As Christmas time approached, Fred grew more insistent upon giving his party but he consented to make it a family affair, with a few intimate friends, instead of the rousing welcome to the townspeople which at first had been in his mind. He came home each night loaded down with packages, ordered a tremendous Christmas tree and stocked his cellar with the wines and liquors he knew Mr. Perkins admired but which he himself seldom tasted. To the great relief of most of us, the *Mistresses Hoag* declined, for the old lady was unable to go out in the evening and Mrs. Ebenezer rarely accepted an invitation without her. Captain Tewksbury was ashore for the winter and promised to be on hand; and the half dozen additional guests included the chairman of the Republican town committee and the artist whose works covered almost the entire wall space of the house. Now that I was used to seeing the modern building in juxtaposition to the Colonial house and the second coat of paint had proven so much more harmonious than the

one which had shocked Mr. Perkins, the estate did not appear to be hopelessly marred.

The prospects of a party, with another chance to wear a beautiful gown, raised Mary's spirits, too, and she made several shopping trips with Beatrice and invited me once, in secret, to see her new clothes as she tried them on. I waited in the upper hallway until she opened the door to her room and beckoned me to come in on tiptoes. By lamp-light and in the privacy of her chamber her quick maturity struck me more forcibly than it had on Mattie's wedding day. Her eyes were alight and her firm young flesh was so marvelously alive that I forgot for a moment the fragility of her filmy gown, took her shoulders in my hands, and kissed her forehead. I don't know what impelled me to do so, and instantly I was confused by the act. I stammered and recoiled, dismayed to see that she was more astonished than I was, but the expression on my face must have made her think I was afraid I had offended her and impulsively she put her arms around my neck and kissed me in return.

"You are wonderful," I said, and backed out of the room. The incident passed quickly from my mind, although I retained the vision of her loveliness, and when we met again her utter lack of embarrassment convinced me that I had placed a ridiculous emphasis upon a perfectly natural situation. On Christmas eve we gathered in the Atwell establishment just after supper and Beatrice appeared in black velvet, cut low enough at the throat to display a hint of her shoulders. Every windowpane had its evergreen wreath and burning candle and from all directions the light caught her flaming red hair. From the moment she entered, Fred could hardly keep his eyes from her.

As the gifts were taken one by one from the Christmas tree, I noticed a huge roll of carpet which was saved for

the last and when it was spread upon the floor the admiration of every one wandered from the two young beauties and was focused upon the magnificent rug which Captain Tewksbury had obtained from Jerusalem. Fred was overjoyed and took the opportunity to display as well the rugs he had purchased. The effect was lavish and incongruous, for Mr. Bentley's pastoral landscapes spotted with domestic animals shone down from the walls while the floors were covered with subtle Oriental designs which were stained with the richest of dyes. A small orchestra which Heinrich Stadler had recommended was tuning its instruments in the hallway, but before the parlor and adjacent sitting room were cleared for dancing Fred came forward with another surprise. He had become fervently interested in the phonograph and played a series of cylindrical records from which issued the voices of Uncle Josh and Ada Jones. It was the first I had heard.

Holiday manifestations are nearly always depressing to me and I knew the same was true of Mr. Perkins. He had slipped into the pantry with Captain Tewksbury, who was by no means as abstemious as his partner, and the pair of them had taken enough eggnog from the punchbowl to make candles, oil paintings and reproductions of sound blend joyfully together. I hastened to join them and soon felt a pleasant exhilaration myself. It was better so, I thought. Fred soon led the other men to the punchbowl and when a toast was proposed by Mr. Perkins to the health of the bride, Mattie, flushed and contented, stood beneath a chandelier and raised her glass. Her pose revealed unmistakably what I had divined before. She was pregnant.

"My God," I muttered to myself, "it's beginning all over again." I was sure she would produce small replicas of herself, perhaps two or three at a time, but Fred, inordinately

proud of her condition, announced to her further embarrassment that the first boy was to be named Gladstone and for a middle name should have that of his grandfather, Elijah. He took an extra glass of eggnog, which was by no means as harmless as it tasted, and the dancing began.

I danced the first waltz with Mary, who moved as if she were the music itself, and as we whirled around I recognized the tune as one which Lottie Bacon had particularly admired when sung in ballad form by the leading lady of the Trocadero Burlesquers. It was quite the rage, and in detriment to the mood I tried to maintain, the words revolved in my brain as the dance went on.

"She was only a bird in a gilded cage."

As the music died down my nerves were so stirred that I was aware of a passing regret that birds were so scarce and expensive. Fred had selected Beatrice for his partner, since Mattie did not care for dancing. I had contrived to have Charley escort Beatrice to the party but he did not dance and was unable to suppress his yawns as he sat uneasily in a corner.

It had been some months since Fred had held a strange young girl in his arms and his enjoyment of it was by no means restrained. Beatrice, far from seeming reluctant to respond to his attentions, appeared to me to be actually provoking them. I was afraid that the others would notice it, so I asked her for the next dance and from that time on tried to keep her as much as possible beyond the reach of Fred, who, as the party became more lively, was even less discreet. I did not think for a moment that he meant any harm, but I was anxious not to have unforeseen complications disturb the evening. The result was that I danced almost constantly with Beatrice, who had that disconcerting liteness which made me feel all her movements beneath

the palm of my hand. She leaned toward me in such a way that I tightened my arm and oblivious to the others in the room let our bodies come together as the cadences of the music so insidiously indicated. To what extent she was conscious of my sensations, I cannot say. She was enjoying herself, that was certain, and I had had too few such experiences to deliberately hold her off. Her eyes glowed and her hair was like an auburn haze around us both. She was hungry for movement and music and the feeling that her feet might leave the floor. What I had forestalled on Fred's part I am afraid I must have more than equaled myself, for all at once I had a fear that something had gone wrong. We stopped and I looked around the room.

"Where is Mary?" I asked, and we searched all the corners for her.

"Why, she must have gone home. That's strange," said Beatrice.

I thought it was strange indeed, and both of us had less eagerness for dancing. In a few moments the guests dispersed with shouts of "Merry Christmas," and I sought out Mr. Perkins who accompanied us across the street to the Griffin homestead. There was no sign of Mary downstairs.

The last train had gone to Boston hours before and Mr. Perkins and I had planned to sleep in Eastford, sharing one of the guest rooms in the wing which was farthest from the lane. As we made ready to retire, Mr. Perkins said: "Frank, my boy, you have decided talents as a marriage promoter."

For a long time, before I could go to sleep, I was oppressed by what seemed to be his misunderstanding of my efforts to keep peace in the Atwell family. Could it be possible that he was rebuking me? And all the time the perfume of red hair and soft strong arms was conspiring

with the eggnog to make my heart beat like the mechanism of a hand-car coasting down grade. I wished that my elderly friends would keep their daughters in a nunnery and that my fatal readiness to offer my services in all sorts of diplomatic causes could be more easily restrained. The frost kept twigs and boards snapping and at last I was forced to get out of bed and pace the floor. Mr. Perkins, who slept very lightly, woke up and I saw he was watching me. I could not help discussing with him what was on my mind.

"Do you think I have really thrown a monkey wrench into the machinery?" I asked, now thoroughly contrite. He laughed and sat up in bed.

"I should not worry," he said. "Other forces are at work." He hesitated a moment, then added: "That brings me to a story no gentleman should repeat. But you are my partner, and were the first to be called into this case. You are aware that Melzer, the hired man, has a daughter named Sue, who in the course of her duties upstairs wears carpet slippers. One afternoon not long ago I strolled into the carriage shed for no particular purpose and once there I had a presentiment that I was not alone. My eyes happened to rest on that old-fashioned painted carriage and I couldn't help but see, besides the decorations, the soles of two cow-hide boots belonging to Charley, and a pair of carpet slippers. And they were pointing in contrary directions."

IT was through Lottie Bacon that we learned that another step in the development of Mr. Griffin's plan was going forward at Medford Hillside, under the auspices of Mrs. Bartholomew and Mrs. Ebenezer Hoag. Lottie called one afternoon at the office, to the infinite disgust of Miss Zinc, and told us that Anne, on the days she visited her grandmother, was thrown constantly with the adopted son of Mrs. Bartholomew's second daughter. The young man's name was John Treadwell and he was even tempered and capable enough, with no signs of bad blood, although he possessed much more honesty than intelligence. Lately he had become quite good looking, Lottie said, and his hair was partly gray. I began to understand why Anne seemed to be blossoming. It was a bit disgusting, all the pairing off and preening and swelling of abdomens, Mattie waddling patiently toward parturition, Anne stalking a foster-cousin, and I snorting and prancing like a satyr whenever my client's children dressed as grown-up women for an hour.

I was frankly ashamed of my actions with Beatrice on Christmas eve, although by her subsequent willingness to repeat the performance on a smaller scale she had shown that the remorse was all mine. Beatrice could take care of herself, I knew, but I had not been able to reëstablish my

old comradeship with Mary. I believe she had been hurt because, being so fond of Beatrice, she had resented the latter's enthusiasm for dancing with men. Reluctant as I was to be a traitor to Mr. Griffin I could not honestly look forward to Charley's marrying Beatrice Tewksbury. If the house and the bric-à-brac had been of her own generation and had reflected her spirit it might have been worth while to her. But no collection of relics could hold her long — and certainly no man who could not keep his eyes open after eight in the evening. Her red hair was beautiful by sunrise or sunset or lamplight but her shoulders, with a texture like cream-colored petals, were meant to be displayed at night. Actually I could not help but feel a trifle jubilant because of what Mr. Perkins had told me about Charley and Sue.

While things were in that suspended state, the spring stole over the fields and the hills of Eastford. Fresh crocuses appeared like stars upon the lawn and cowslips blossomed in the creek bed. After a day or two of sunshine, all the branches shook themselves and were green. I took the girls for a walk with Melzer and Charley to the swamp beyond the nearest range of hills, where they had tapped a grove of maple trees at the feet of which the last of the snow and ice was hidden. The sap was oozing from the spigots and dropping into the pails, and the softness of the air melted the slight coolness which had existed between Mary and me. Out of doors she always received the larger share of our attention for Beatrice was not bred on a farm and had to be taught the things which Mary had known from babyhood. Melzer built a fire in a sheltered spot and hung a huge iron kettle upon a tripod to boil down the sap. We all remained there until dusk, thinking of the pleasant months which lay ahead.

Mr. Griffin had never showed less signs of worry. He no longer had the slightest doubt that Mattie would be happy and he realized he had been almost niggardly in his estimate of Joe's capabilities. Charley had trebled the income from the truck garden, the dairy products and henyard. And Anne had taken the responsibility of entertaining the Hoags, and had found the proper man.

I caught several glimpses of Sue as she whisked in and out of the kitchen and was forced to acknowledge that she was neither sluggish nor bad to look at. She had so much vitality that her heels pounded the floor through the soles of her slippers, the sight of which reawakened my misgivings. If she should become the owner of the things she had dusted all these years, I could imagine her closing up the main body of the house and living in the kitchen. Certainly I am not snobbish, but to picture Sue beside Mrs. Ebenezer Hoag brought home to me that when all is said and done, there still are well-defined classes. In searching for a way to divert nature from its course, I weighed the advisability of dropping a hint to Melzer and as quickly abandoned the notion, not only on account of sportsmanship, but because I suspected he would take half the hide off Sue's broad back with a harness strap and, in ignorance of the probable effect of such stimulation, might make the girl rapacious where previously she had been merely complaisant. If I spoke to Charley directly I should certainly have to explain why I was meddling in such personal matters and I could not do that without Mr. Griffin's authorization.

I grew peevish, for my mood had been delicious all afternoon, and decided that I should forbid Mr. Perkins to rob me of all my pleasure in the present by continually opening up vistas ahead which my obtuseness would have

mercifully screened from me. He must learn to keep his observations and prophecies to himself. Merely thinking of troublesome results might have an influence in bringing them about. Surely, in comparison to my inflammable state, Sue and Charley had all the best of it. They slept soundly and did their work well, without fretting and floundering and wondering what ailed them.

When we returned to the house, John Treadwell was standing beside Anne, who was radiant. I had come to like him and to realize there was a genuine affinity between them. As she stood there I became aware for the first time that she had hips and breasts and a sort of languor which might be made to glow. Or was it the devilish sex and spring in the air? I began to fear that at a given signal all the men and women in the country, together with rabbits, moose, beetles and all the creatures of earth, would begin a frightful orgy. I wished impatiently that they would, and be done with it.

EACH year, on the seventeenth of June and the fourth of July, Mr. Griffin had been in the habit of staging a somewhat elaborate display of fireworks. At first it had taken place on the lawn, to amuse the children, and Melzer had stood by with a forcepump in case the roof should catch fire. The people of the town had gathered around, or strolled up and down the lane, to see the rockets and Roman candles and finally the event had assumed a semi-public character and had been moved to the edge of the marsh, at the foot of the granite ledge, where there was less danger of conflagration. Fred had been looking forward to his first patriotic celebration as a citizen of Eastford and supplemented the usual supply of pyrotechnics extravagantly, for Gladstone Elijah was expected to be born around the time of the anniversary of the battle of Bunker Hill. In fact, Fred was counting upon the seventeenth of June as his first child's birthday. He had ordered a tremendous set piece which, when ignited, would contain the pattern of the American flag and had had the initials G. E. A. made and held ready to be inserted if Mattie should do her part with punctuality.

I never knew where Fred got all his money, for the paintings, rugs and phonograph records alone must have cost a small fortune, but he went in for everything so

keenly that it would have seemed downright unkindness to have discouraged him. I believe he was enjoying his family life so much that his ardor made him irresistible as a salesman of insurance. However, he did not suggest paying off the principal of the mortgage.

On the evening of the seventeenth, while Mattie was in labor pains and it was understood that a lad Fred had hired should set off one rocket in case of a boy and two if the child was a girl, the road along the border of the marsh was crowded with men, women and children not only from Eastford but the surrounding towns as well. Buggies were lined up by the woods, and Fred was bustling from group to group, introducing one man to another and all strangers to Mr. Griffin. He had spread the word by means of his political channels.

Neither Mary nor I was fond of throngs, so we had taken an obscure pathway which led through the woods to the top of the granite ledge and from that point could see the glint of the distant sea, the flashes of matches and glow of cigars in the crowd below. When three hissing fountains spaced forty yards apart began showering sparks as a signal that the entertainment was under way we sat upon a rock and followed with our eyes the graceful parabolas of flame, the colored globes which burst into stars of red and green, and a moment after the devil crackers had snapped themselves out in an angular nest of lightning the sharp reports would reach us in a ragged volley. The sky was tinged with red and the air, although slightly damp, was balmy.

"I think Anne is going to marry that Treadwell fellow," she said, with no prelude or context. Very often she spoke a sentence aloud from the middle of her thoughts, then lapsed into silence without expecting a reply.

"I hope so," I said. It was no longer necessary for me to conceal the fact that I did not enjoy the invasion of the house by the Hoags. Several times I had been on the verge of telling Mary point-blank that her father would have preferred to let matters stand as they were before Mattie's invitation had effected a reconciliation with her grandmother. Only lately I had fully appreciated how lonely it must have been for Mary to grow up among a houseful of alien half-brothers and sisters. I could see that Mr. Griffin loved her best, and knowing his character realized that he would feel obliged in consequence of his secret partiality to favor the others in cases of dispute. I noticed also that Mary kept looking nervously in the direction of the Atwell home, missing some of the choice explosions, and I wondered how much Mattie's condition had worn upon Mary's nerves. Had the story of her mother's protracted agonies ever reached her, and in what distorted form? If Anne should really clear out, it would be Mary's turn to sit at the foot of the table and give her orders gravely to the hired girl who had wheeled her in a carriage. And after that? In God's name I hoped she would sit quiet for a while.

The word had gone out among the spectators that their younger host was waiting for news from his wife's bed-chamber, so that when a single rocket crawled slowly up a distant imaginary hill and dove out of sight a cheer resounded all along the marsh road and was swelled by shrill voices from the buggies in the shadow of the woods. The giant set-piece was lighted so that one by one the stars and stripes appeared and above the flag shone the letters G. E. A. for Gladstone Elijah Atwell. I hoped some future lawyer was also being born to look after his affairs.

"You don't act as if you worked very hard," Mary said.

She had already stopped being anxious about Mattie and drifted into other lines of thought.

"Do you think I should be more industrious?" I asked.

"No. I hate men who bustle about," she said very positively. Lately Fred had started teasing her about the children she should have. "I hate babies, too," she added.

I was happy that we were agreeing on things and re-establishing the bond which had been strained during the winter. Beatrice was somewhere in the crowd with Joe.

Our wishes were fulfilled in regard to Anne. Her engagement to Mr. John Treadwell was announced before the month was out and this time Mr. Griffin found it very easy to tell her that he intended giving her the lot across the lane from Mattie. He did not have me intimate to John Treadwell, however, that he would advance him money for the house because the young man, the head of a large steel firm, had as much, if not more, than his father-in-law. To me there was something vulgar in starting another square hole in the ground and sticking up fresh-cut timbers. The Treadwell house was to be of the bungalow type, although quite spacious, an idea that John had picked up on a trip to California. The clapboards were not to be painted, but stained. I think Mrs. Bartholomew was quite put out when she saw the building operations go forward for she had wanted Anne to remain in her father's home and gradually take possession.

"The other one's too young to keep house," she said. But John did not encourage the idea because he disliked old-fashioned furniture and small windowpanes. He had seen brick ovens and spinning wheels and fireplaces from boyhood and had determined to have steam heat and what he termed open plumbing.

Perhaps because Joe was so much like Anne in appear-

ance and disposition, he and John Treadwell became good friends. It was really the first friendship Joe had entered into. They lunched together in Boston, went scouring the city for patent window fastenings or spring locks, and in the evenings Joe was often in the company of his sister and her fiancé. John did not take to Fred, however. He was so much more quiet and conservative, so slow to enthusiasm and indifferent to the public good, that Fred's genial manner became almost noisy in comparison and John's slower brain could not follow the rapid shifts of Fred's reasoning. Either man brought out the other's worst qualities and so they avoided one another. Mattie watched the workmen from the upstairs living room window as she nursed the baby. It seemed to me as if she could have nursed Gargantua as well.

As soon as Mattie was out of bed, Fred entered a period of furious activity about which he was extremely secretive. Every evening, Joe told me, he would take a street car in a different direction and come home redolent of a worse grade of tobacco smoke than Mattie ever smelled. Not a noon passed in which he did not have important luncheon appointments and he spent little time in his office. Mr. Griffin had already extended him another loan. I did not feel impelled to guess what he was up to but I dimly realized the Republican convention was close at hand and supposed he was drumming up support for an endowment insurance plank in the party platform. It was not long before he himself let me know how far off the track I had been. One morning he came bursting into our office while Mr. Perkins and I were playing chess and exclaimed:

"I believe I have got it cinched."

I offered him a chair and waited. Never in the history of the commonwealth, he said, had Eastford had a man

on the state ticket. I reflected that the town had done very well in spite of that. Still I thought it would be just as well for Fred to run for something, if it pleased him, and even felt a willingness to pay my poll tax, get my name on the list, and vote for him. The office of lieutenant governor, he explained, would have to be filled this year in an unusual way. Ordinarily either the speaker of the House or the president of the Senate was selected for promotion, according to their popularity and vote-getting strength. At present there was a deadlock, he said. The speaker of the House had been rather strict about log-rolling and had made a number of enemies. The president of the Senate was too openly connected with Tortoise and Patch, the firm of Boston lawyers who as lobbyists had controlled the upper branch of the legislature for years. Fred's remarks were all meaningless to me, but Mr. Perkins appeared to be understanding them and to agree, as far as they had progressed. I suppose I had known that Massachusetts had a lieutenant governor but what his functions were had completely escaped my notice. I could not let the conversation go on without asking,

"What does the lieutenant governor do?"

"Oh, not much of anything," said Fred. "He sets out trees and addresses meetings when the Governor doesn't want to make a trip, and once a week he presides at the Governor's council to approve a list of appointments the Governor has made. There is seldom any question about it. Oh, yes, the council has the right to recommend pardons which the Governor grants offhand in return for the approval of his appointments. There's nothing difficult about the lieutenant governorship."

"It often gets a man into bad company," Mr. Perkins said.

"It's an honor a busy man may accept," Fred replied.

I saw he was a bit crestfallen at our lack of enthusiasm and so I assured him quite sincerely that I would not fail to give him my vote. Before Mr. Perkins could add his promise of support Fred broke out in a roar of laughter.

"You didn't think I was looking for the job myself? I want to offer it to dad." By "dad" he meant Mr. Griffin.

Mr. Perkins beamed. He loved a joke, and especially one which was not too obvious and whose points eluded him in the beginning. But I had seen more of Fred than he had since the wedding and I realized no one had ever been more in earnest. To his way of thinking, after a man had shown his mettle in the business world, had taken his share of responsibility for local improvements, and had brought a large family to the marrying age his life should be crowned with public honors.

"I can imagine Mr. Griffin setting out trees," I said. "But how will you manage about the speeches?"

"A good straightforward man like him makes a fine impression on a crowd. The people are getting tired of oratory," Fred answered.

"Everything is in our favor," he continued, counting Mr. Perkins and me already as his allies. "Not only has Eastford been slighted in the distribution of state officers, but it is Middlesex county's turn to have a man on the council and no active politician wants the job because it gets him into backwater and his rivals get ahead of him. Western Massachusetts is controlled by the farmer vote, and dad can talk to farmers better than the Governor can. Courteney Doane will be Governor and he is a city man, strong with the manufacturers. He wants a running mate who can pull in the votes from the rural districts, and he will be delighted with dad. He wants some one who will not be

knifing him in the back, too, for he intends to be United States senator after two years of the governorship."

"Do they plan things as far ahead as that?" I asked.

"There has to be organization," Fred replied. "Otherwise the people would be a mob."

"I see just one flaw in your plan, if you have the votes," said Mr. Perkins.

"Everybody I have discussed it with thinks the scheme is a lifesaver," Fred interrupted. "The state committeemen were afraid the speaker of the house would bolt and split the party wide open if he was sidetracked for a man on the other side, but dad is an ideal compromise candidate. And they know when he's through he will step out quietly and leave things just where they were, except that they will have a couple of years to mend their fences. The real fight will come two years from now. Of course, dad will be reelected once. It's customary."

Reelected already, I said to myself. And retired. Things are just as they were.

"I mean," Mr. Perkins went on, "that when you tell Elijah what you are cooking up for him he will climb the big tree in the yard and refuse to come down."

"That's where I want your help," Fred said. "You must break this to dad diplomatically. You're both good at that sort of thing." (I winced.)

"Tell him first of all that his time will not be taken up to any great extent. One council meeting a week...lasts about an hour, just before noontime. He doesn't have to read through all the pardon papers. One of the clerks who has been there for years picks out the worthy cases," Fred went on.

I saw a sudden unexpected show of interest in Mr. Perkins' face.

"He can dodge most of the speechmaking," Fred continued. "Perhaps it would be just as well not to mention that, at first. It's sort of unofficial, anyway. He will take the oath after the Governor at the inauguration and I believe he is the chairman of a few standing committees, nothing important. Tell him it's his duty to Eastford and to Middlesex county. If the town is to get its due, who else could be its candidate? Oh, yes, I forgot to say that he's a member of the Grand Army and the committee wants a soldier on the ticket..."

"Was Mr. Griffin in the Civil War?" I asked, astonished.

"He was a quartermaster's clerk," Fred said. "He doesn't say much about it because so many of the soldiers had their arms and legs shot off that his service didn't amount to anything, he thinks. He believes he should have insisted upon being sent under fire..."

"And his comrades wish they had been in the commissary," Mr. Perkins said. "I was taken prisoner. That's why I like good food."

"The main point for you to stress with dad is the honor it will reflect upon the family, how it will help the girls and Joe. That will get under his skin," Fred continued. "It will help his business, too, for his name will appear sometimes in the paper...but maybe you had better not call that to his attention. He has always been shy of publicity."

Neither Mr. Perkins nor I had had an opportunity to accept or decline the mission and Fred did not give us a moment to take the offensive. He had learned, in his brief political experience, to get out of a room with an affirmative answer as neatly as a shoplifter could make his exit with a fur-piece under his coat. Mr. Perkins was left facing me, and I was waiting to hear him speak. Fred had gone, that

was all. As Mr. Perkins showed me no signs that he intended to reassure me, I went into my own room and sat until lunch time, pondering the tangents upon which the human brain is capable of embarking and the strange facets which may appear in the characters of those whom one thought one knew so well.

At the precise instant he appeared in my doorway the flash which enabled me to solve the riddle occurred. He was thinking of Joseph Poole and Jesse Pomeroy, his long obsessions. Mr. Griffin as lieutenant governor could secure the freedom of one and humane treatment for the other. So without waiting for him to speak I said, with more aspersion than I intended:

"So you are the lawyer who has promised his client a peaceful old age!" I had evidently not quite forgiven him his jibe about Beatrice on Christmas night.

He was too good-natured to take offense, and his quick wit fitted my hasty remark into its proper place.

"That leaves us horse and horse," he said and smiled.

IT all went off quite smoothly, just as Fred had predicted. Courteney Doane, the Republican candidate for governor, had been well pleased with the suggestion. He liked Mr. Griffin and trusted him. The citizens of Eastford and of Middlesex county rallied with the utmost enthusiasm around their leading citizen, the up-state farmers rejoiced at the prospect of having a friend in the council chamber. The great difficulty was, as Mr. Perkins had predicted, inducing Mr. Griffin to consent to have his name put up but when Mr. Perkins agreed to join the party and to make the nomination speech Mr. Griffin capitulated, while Fred wrung his hand. I had declined to have anything to do with the affair.

On the morning of the opening of the Republican convention, however, I could not resist slipping into the gallery to watch the proceedings. It was held that year in Tremont Temple, not fifty yards from the office, and Fred, who was everywhere and seemed to see everything, noticed my entrance and got me a splendid seat in the balcony, almost over the stage. That was my first political meeting, and the eagerness and tension on the faces of the delegates, the dignitaries on the platform and the members of the audience was quite contagious. I began to suspect there was really a fight on hand and that Fred's well-laid plans were

going to be shattered, for I could not conceive that two thousand men could get so excited over a cut and dried program. Perhaps the speaker of the House would bolt after all. I was not anxious for Mr. Griffin's sake for I knew that he would have gladly accepted defeat and gone about his business.

"Who's the little man with the whiskers, just at the Governor's left," a man sitting near me asked.

"That's Elijah Griffin of Eastford," I replied, so that every one around could hear.

"Elijah Griffin?" the man repeated.

"The man who's going to be lieutenant governor," I added. I couldn't seem to keep from telling what I knew.

"Oh," said my neighbor, and looked away.

When Courteney Doane came in, a band struck up "Hail to the Chief" and the delegates cheered for fully ten minutes. Whenever they showed signs of quieting down, a big man in front with a wooden rattle and a deep bass voice let out a roar and started waves of applause again. When the chairman of the state committee nodded in his direction, he subsided and the cheering died down. The enthusiasm is well organized, too, I said to myself. These chaps take care not to let the people romp. I was all for such decent restraint.

The routine business was soon over, and Senator Call of Chelsea got up to nominate Courteney Doane. Before he started, the big man in front began to cheer again and the delegates shouted until the Governor raised his hand. Senator Call could easily make himself heard, but he was too heavy in his metaphor and spoke too long. Men showed signs of impatience, so the end was cut short and missed its full effect. It was no matter, for there was no other candidate. Mr. Doane was chosen as the party's leader

by acclamation, the band played, reporters rushed to the stage door to look for messenger boys, and the hall grew hushed again. It was Mr. Perkins' turn.

"Who's the tall guy?" asked another man in my row. I did not have time to answer before Mr. Perkins began:

"The one I am about to nominate for the second highest honor within the gift of the delegates is unknown in political circles, but among the business men of Boston and his neighbors in Middlesex county he is respected as an honest and capable man. I will not say he is inexperienced in the conduct of public affairs, since for twenty solid years my candidate has received his training in that unparalleled school of statesmanship, the New England town meeting...."

"Hurrah..." broke in a chorus of out-of-town visitors from the gallery and the delegates joined in. Mr. Perkins had captured his audience, and was in his element. As he proceeded my admiration for Mr. Griffin, great as it had been, expanded with every phrase.

"He is not an orator. He is quite content to sit at home and rest, for bereft of his help-meet he has been obliged, gentlemen, to assist along the paths which lead to upright manhood and womanhood two sons and three daughters. He has conducted a thriving enterprise. He has beautified his town by means of unostentatious philanthropy. Now, at the call of public duty, this modest God-fearing citizen has put aside his private preference and has replied, 'I shall do the best I can.'

"At the call of his party, I repeat, this man has generously come forward, and has given me the honor and the privilege to propose as Republican candidate for lieutenant governor, and that nomination, gentlemen, is equivalent to election—Mr. Elijah Wetherle Griffin of Eastford."

The delegates shouted and waved their arms. The gubernatorial candidate, Mr. Doane, shook Mr. Griffin's hand, the chairman of the state committee nodded hastily to the leader of the band who started up a march, and as soon as the hall was quiet again the spokesman for the only other candidate withdrew the name of his man in advance, in order that Mr. Griffin's nomination might be unanimous. I had not been worried about Mr. Perkins' ability to speak on any occasion, but after the vote was taken I saw Mr. Griffin rise timidly and clear his throat. The rustle and whispering stopped at once.

I could barely hear him when he began, but as he went on without disaster my heart stopped pounding and I listened in amazement.

"My old friend, Mr. Perkins," he began, "has said all that needs to be said, perhaps a trifle more... (There was laughter) I did want to stay at home. I will, as I said to him, do my best. That is all. You have made a splendid choice to lead the party to victory (he bowed to Mr. Doane and held up his hand to choke off the cheers) and I shall try not to handicap him. I thank you."

It was great. I joined the cheering myself and then wormed my way out of the balcony and made straight for the spot where I thought Mr. Perkins would be. I found him standing at the Parker House bar.

"How was it?" he asked.

"You knocked them dead," I answered. "But what got into our candidate? I never heard him say so much before." Mr. Perkins admitted he had written the response and Fred had helped Mr. Griffin memorize it. We had another drink and went back to the office, while the convention discussed the platform. There were no real issues and no

fear of competition from the Democrats, so Mr. Perkins' speech was really the high spot of the entire meeting. Some of the newspapers said as much.

The person most genuinely pleased by Mr. Griffin's entry into public life was Mrs. Ebenezer Hoag, who saw at once the impetus it would give to the plans she had for Anne's social career. She persuaded Anne and John to delay their wedding until after the election and arranged an elaborate party to be held at Medford Hillside. Whatever the Crowningshields did was news, so the papers printed a flattering announcement of the engagement, with photographs of Anne and what they termed "the Griffin mansion." The publicity man for the Republican state committee seized upon this opportunity to have inserted a picture of Mr. Griffin, stroking the neck of one of the draft horses.

The campaign came to its conclusion with no unforeseen difficulties and on the few occasions when Mr. Griffin had to appear with Courteney Doane, Mr. Perkins was called upon to introduce him and provided him with a witty response, as he had done in the convention. Mr. Griffin's remarks became briefer and briefer, until one of the reporters noticed he had said a great deal in twenty-six words and played up the fact. From that time on, his brevity was his best asset and attracted state-wide admiration. On election night, Joe and I escorted Beatrice and Mary to the American House to hear the returns. I had been most surprised by Mary's enthusiasm. She had seen the State House dome glistening in the distance whenever she had walked in the hills and liked to think of her father sitting beneath it. She read the newspapers and started a scrapbook of clippings in which her father's name was mentioned or his remarks quoted and given praise. The Democrats con-

centrated their attack upon Courteney Doane, so that nothing derogatory to Mr. Griffin got into print.

I suppose there has never been a state election in which the results were so easy to foresee, and still in the corridors of the American House that feverish excitement I had noticed in Tremont Temple on the day of the convention was still more prevalent. When the figures from some small town on Cape Cod, Doane 46, McGovern 7, were posted on the blackboard a hearty cheer went up and later in the evening, as the Boston returns came in, ward by ward, although the Democrat seemed to have a comfortable majority, the Republican leaders found some cause of encouragement in comparing the vote to that of the previous election. In western Massachusetts, Mr. Griffin ran slightly ahead of the ticket and before midnight it was certain that the Republicans had swept the state. At eleven o'clock I took the girls downstairs to the Rathskeller to dance, and Joe came with us reluctantly. Mary was excited and happy and in trying to treat her with all possible consideration I found myself holding her as tightly as I held Beatrice. She was a little surprised at first, but before long she lent herself to the dance and half closed her eyes as each waltz came slowly to an end.

The weeks which followed the inauguration proved that Fred had been correct in estimating the duties of the lieutenant governorship lightly. Mr. Griffin soon got accustomed to spending one morning a week in the council chamber and found the clerks there courteous and willing to spare him trouble. Joe took more and more of the work at the factory upon himself. At Eastford, however, the neighbors began addressing Mr. Griffin as "Governor" and Anne's name appeared frequently in the social columns.

Her wedding took place in the Congregational Church, as Mattie's had, but a much larger section was ribboned off for invited guests and the list of invitations was prepared by Mrs. Ebenezer Hoag. John was too busy for a long wedding journey and as soon as Anne started entertaining carriages arrived frequently from Medford and Salem and groups of her guests from Boston came often by train. Her sisters were not always included in her parties, for Mary avoided the new house as much as possible and Mattie was too busy with the baby. Mr. Griffin was extremely fond of the child, so much so that I thought Anne did not look upon the situation too kindly. At any rate, the Atwell and Treadwell families, separated by the trees which lined the lane, had little in common and were seldom seen together.

The new division which had come about gradually left Mr. Perkins and me to spend our Sunday afternoons with Mr. Griffin and Mary. We always dropped in to see Mattie and the grandson but seldom intruded among the new friends Anne had chosen. In mid-winter, Mattie showed symptoms of pregnancy again.

Mr. Griffin's colleagues at the State House were already a little in awe of him. He considered each question upon its merits and obviously had no ax to grind. Mr. Perkins contrived to bring pressure upon the parole board and after some delay a recommendation for the release of Joseph Poole reached the council. It came up at an unfortunate time, for the general financial situation was strained and one or two banks went under, just enough to arouse a distinct hostility to bankers. Mr. Griffin was convinced that Poole should be freed and spoke earnestly in favor of the pardon but the Governor called in Mr. Perkins and suggested that the matter be postponed for a while. It would

be very bad politics to release such a well-known offender when public feeling was particularly sensitive to fiduciary crimes. Spring came, the legislature prorogued, and no suitable opportunity offered itself, so Joseph Poole remained in jail.

ALL day the snow had come swirling into Eastford from the marshes, whining through the bare branches of the trees, drifting over the stone walls and hedges. It was a real northeast blizzard, good to last two or three days, and Mr. Perkins and I had given up hopes of returning to Boston. I was glad to look forward to a few peaceful days in the old house, where I was free to roam from attic to cellar and to sit by the organ while Mary drew forth sounds which blended with those of the storm or dropped to a lower stratum which made it seem as if the world were flying in two directions at once. Mr. Griffin was suffering from a cold and had asked our permission to go to bed early. He was seldom ill and when he did feel badly resorted only to simple home remedies such as greased flannel and hot buttered rum.

It was just after his reelection. His nomination had followed that of Courteney Doane without question and he had learned to take his duties casually. For days at a time I am sure he forgot that he was lieutenant governor and outside of Eastford and a few surrounding towns not many men remember his name. As Mr. Perkins and I were going into the library for a smoke early in the evening, Joe asked permission to join us. I could tell by his tone that something was on his mind.

Before he began to talk to us, Joe took from his pocket a ruled sheet of paper on which he had drawn a ragged diagram and jotted numerous figures.

"The organ business is going up the spout," he said.

As he gave us the facts from which he had drawn his conclusion it was evident that he knew what he was talking about. Year by year, since the invention of the phonograph and the increasing popularity of pianos had made themselves felt, the sales of Griffin and Tewksbury organs had dropped. The curve upon his diagram was consistently downhill. Their make, he said, had suffered more than those of their competitors because of the higher prices. Mahogany almost as good as the wood they used was coming to America in steamships which made two trips to every one of Captain Tewksbury, who clung to his five-masted schooner. An expert could see that his wood had a finer grain and took a more beautiful polish but the buyers of organs were seldom judges of mahogany. Joe had finished taking account of stock, and the inventory showed that the warehouses were full and that manufacturing must be curtailed soon for want of storage space.

"We can go along for a few years more," he said, "but there's no future in it. I know that father would never give up, but there is nothing for me to look forward to."

I was examining the diagram and found one red line which mounted upward more rapidly than the decline of organ sales dropped. I seized upon it as a possible hopeful element.

"What is that?" I asked.

"Steel," said Joe eagerly. "Steel is the best line in the world to-day."

I looked quickly at Mr. Perkins, wondering how his

agile mind would get around that. For once he was not equal to the occasion.

"You must remember," he said weakly, "that in the organ business you can be a proprietor in a very few years. In any other line you will have to begin at the bottom, without influence, and every manufacturer and business man has sons, brothers and cousins to push along ahead of you."

"I have thought of that," Joe answered, "but I am sure John will put me on the inside track."

Because of his father's feelings, Joe had not asked his new brother-in-law point-blank if he would take him in. Still he could not postpone his decision much longer.

"I thought perhaps you would suggest this to father," he said, turning first to Mr. Perkins, then to me. Another delightful errand, I said to myself. As I considered further what Joe had said, the gravity of the situation was much more apparent to me. Neither Mr. Perkins nor I, after our endorsement of steel as opposed to street railways, could honestly pretend that Joe was mistaken.

"Must you make a change right away?" Mr. Perkins asked.

"I'm wasting time," said Joe.

After Joe went upstairs, Mr. Perkins and I sought different corners of the house, for we wanted to think and not to talk. He made for the dining room where the decanter stood ready, and I placed one of the kitchen chairs behind the range, near the hot copper boiler. The cold was penetrating ever so slowly the last defenses of the walls. What Joe had said made me quite despondent, for it struck the first severe blow at the plan upon which his father was staking his hopes. Mr. Griffin had been so contented, lately, so different from the nervous little man who had called that first day to see Mr. Perkins, that I could not bear to

see him harassed again. He was not weak, but had borne too much already. Of all the men I knew, he best deserved a pleasant and tranquil existence. I was afraid Joe's withdrawal from the business would complicate matters gravely. It would even make the light duties of the lieutenant governorship onerous and Mr. Griffin had actually come to enjoy the weekly meetings and the luncheons which followed. The state employees were friendly to him, they had, in fact, been chosen for their friendliness, and his colleagues, the most skeptical of them convinced that at last they had found a completely unselfish politician, were proud to serve with him. I had visited the executive offices once or twice, since his election, and found the atmosphere surprisingly sympathetic. Something remained of the grace of historic courts, although that thought would have shocked the council members and their constituents. The council chamber was decorated in buff and blue, with a circular desk of the finest mahogany, which Mr. Griffin fingered with appreciation as he listened to the remarks. A huge chandelier hung directly over the center. On the wall, like a coat of arms, was the seal of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

I did not blame Joe for the ascendancy of steel and phonographs and the corresponding decline of street railways and reed organs but I was less interested in what happened to him than I was in Mr. Griffin. The latter's friendship had meant so much to me, he had received me so kindly into his house and family, he had such rare integrity, that I would have sacrificed the future of a full regiment of boys to secure his happiness. The organ business, granting that it was on its last legs, had sustained Mr. Griffin's interest in life through fifteen dreary years and I knew he would not sell the factory or close it down. He

would lose money, and could afford to lose. His workmen would be given a livelihood and the firm of Griffin and Tewksbury would continue to display their sign on Hanover street.

Joe's perspicacity had been particularly hard for me to face, since it brought out into the open the awareness of change and disintegration which the condition of the estate had forced upon me slowly. The Treadwell house, quite marvelous for the coast of California, was a wretched apex for an equilateral triangle formed by the Atwell residence and the old homestead. The stain had turned out to be the color of coffee grounds and while its preservative properties were excellent it did not blend with salmon and white. John Treadwell was less careful each day to conceal his mild contempt for Fred's fads and Anne was resentful because her father had started a large bank account for Gladstone Elijah. I am sure Mrs. Bartholomew had warned her that her father's goods would be dissipated if she did not look out.

I tried to think clearly about all phases of the situation and to remind myself that in place of all the dissolution which depressed me so, there must be new growth as well. Mattie and Anne were definitely of the old régime, specializing in different phases of it. I thought of them as comical, in a way, and of their husbands as serviceable accessories. Joe was capable but narrow. He might do well in business, and business had been the mainstay of New England life but never had been its object. There were social and spiritual values which Joe would slough off.

The new generation, the life which would persist and bring forth something of its own, still understandable in terms of what it had sprung from, was represented by Beatrice and Mary and I could no longer conceal from my-

self that I shrank from witnessing their experiments. I did not want to stay around and see what might happen to them, not because I was afraid they were not equal to their responsibilities, but on account of the hurt I felt when I realized they must drift away from me. I was neither young nor old. Mr. Griffin and Mrs. Ebenezer treated me as if I were a contemporary. So did the girls, and it resulted in my being each day a bit more of a hypocrite. In such moments as I spent that evening, I could not deny that I wished to keep the girls as they were, to shield their youth and beauty from eligible young men, to restrict their destiny because I had not the qualities for sharing it. I wanted to admire them, to touch them, to watch them bloom without incurring the responsibility which would fit me for such privileges. I knew it was not good for them to talk and act frankly with me, for in the relationships they must assume there was no safe place for such comradeship. I did not want to endure the pain which longer association with them would bring me. I longed for the end of the world, for delirium, for Nirvana. I had never allowed a human being, except just lately Mr. Perkins and Mr. Griffin, to get his fingers on my heart. There was not a single place in the scheme of things which I cared to fill, which I could think about without repulsion, or abject cowardice. If I had had to work, I should have shot myself. The sound of a baby crying, though he was across the street, made it impossible for me to think of anything but getting away. At that moment I was happy that Mary was in the house, sleeping. I would have been uneasy if she were awake. I should not have shed a tear if she had died that night. I know I should have felt relief, for her and for me.

Ridiculous notions had come into my head at times. I had asked myself, with pathetic earnestness, if after all I

did not owe a duty to society, if I should not curtail my mania for solitude and ease, and enter the struggle into which my duller classmates had thrown themselves. Should I not hustle, like Joe, like Fred, as Mr. Griffin had in his youth? My answer in each case was no, and from Mr. Perkins' example only did I derive comfort. But I could not compare myself to Mr. Perkins. I had not his wit, his geniality, his learning. His natural gifts had entitled him to take things effortlessly. I had no such talents. I was not modest. I realized that I knew more about history than Fred, more about art than Anne, more about dancing than Charley, more about politics than the lieutenant governor. But the spinster who found books for me at the Athenæum had forgotten more history than I had been able to acquire, and Beatrice had been more graceful in learning to walk than I was in waltzing. I did not bore the girls, because of my advantage in age and experience. In ten years time they would think of me as a well-meaning and futile old codger. That is, unless they married business men and disfigured their minds and bodies doing what was right.

I could not understand how I had been maneuvered gradually from my usual objectivity, or what had become of my sense of humor. I was miserable, not for the sake of Mr. Griffin or of any other outside person. I was vaguely unhappy on my own account, a novel and disturbing experience. Previously I had been proud of my inaction, supporting its inconveniences with a sort of zeal for the principle. I was a demagogue turned inside out. Now I had lost my convictions but not the habits with which they had enchained me. I knew I ought to withdraw from Eastford. I knew just as well that I should be unable to do it.

A bell rang.

I started to my feet in surprise, for the snow and the wind were still howling outside and the clock said half past eleven.

It rang again, more insistently.

I hurried to the front door, so that the whole house need not be aroused. The station master, covered with snow and his face nearly frozen where the gale had blown upon it from the marsh, extended his ice-covered mitten in which was embedded a telegram. The envelope was addressed to Elijah Griffin, so I asked the station agent to thaw himself out in the kitchen while I went upstairs to deliver the message.

Mr. Griffin answered my knock and sitting up in bed fumbled for matches with which to light the little whale oil night lamp by his bed. Around his neck was the remnants of a red flannel shirt, smeared with goose grease, and the chamber smelled of Arabian balsam he had swallowed before going to sleep. He was calm, although it was most unusual for him to be waked up in the middle of a blizzard to be handed a telegram. He spread it out by the night lamp, read a word or two, then turned pale. My alarm caused my mind to race from one possibility to another, rapidly. Mary, the only person in the world who could cause him such a shock, was asleep not two doors away, down the hall. I think for a moment he forgot that I was in the room. Then he turned to me, white and trembling with cold.

"The Governor is dead," he said, and dropped the message on the quilt.

PART TWO



“That we may mention it once for all, in the panegyrical part of this work some particular person is meant; but, in the satirical, nobody.”

FIELDING
in a footnote to
A Journey From This World to the Next.

AT three o'clock in the morning, a dozen newspaper men, aroused from their drowsy state by the gale of sleet which lashed across the eastern slope of Beacon Hill, picked their way down the perilous State House steps which led from beneath the Bulfinch pillars to the sidewalk. Watchmen with iron shovels had been working all night to keep the passage clear but each moment the stone slabs were recoated with ice. The double-seated Griffin sleigh, drawn slowly by the geldings who struggled against the wind, drove up and came to a halt while reporters, up to their knees in snow, helped the four occupants, wrapped in coats and mufflers and stiff with cold, to get out. First came Mr. Perkins, who was in the front seat with Charley.

"It's a terrible night, Governor," one of the men said to him.

"The Governor's in the seat behind," Mr. Perkins said. "And please don't ask him questions out here. He's got a bad sore throat." I helped Mr. Griffin to his feet and two men lifted him to the sidewalk. I was sure he had a fever, but he had ridden the full nine miles without saying a single word. His mind was working like a churn in which the butter was stiff. I could almost feel it. The greased red flannel chafed his chest. But as he regained the use of his

limbs, absent-mindedly he began helping Charley blanket the geldings.

"Walk them to the stable, and rub 'em down good," he said.

"What's that?" one reporter whispered to another, for Mr. Griffin was so hoarse they could not make out what he said.

"Come inside, Elijah," Mr. Perkins said, taking his elbow and starting him up the steps. "You'll catch your death of cold."

Courteney Doane, I learned from one of the watchmen, had died from eating soft-shelled crabs. We entered the corridors of the State House, just off the Hall of Flags, where the sergeant-at-arms' assistant, wearing his tall hat and holding a mace in his hand, advanced to greet us. Lights were burning furiously in the executive offices and in the office of the secretary of state. No one knew exactly what should be done, for no precedent existed. The officials and employees who had been notified of Governor Doane's sudden death had converged through the storm and had consulted with one another as to how they should welcome the new chief executive when he arrived. Every one was most considerate and courteous, but the whole performance had an atmosphere of unreality. The huge building, its corridors dark and deserted except for the group in the Hall of Flags, the sudden relief from three hours of cold and blizzard, the weirdness of the hour and the fact that our minds had not fully grasped the implications of what had happened, put us in a state of supernatural awe. They all spoke in hushed voices, trying to choose words which were cordial and respectful of the dead at the same time, and in trying to improvise a ceremony tripped over one another's heels and started echoes rumbling toward the

depths of the boiler room and up to the frescoed roof. Around us, in glass cases, drooped hundreds of Civil War flags and one of the newspaper men suggested to me that Mr. Griffin take the oath before the flag of the regiment in which he had served. I discouraged the idea, remembering what Mr. Perkins had said about the quartermaster corps. The secretary of the commonwealth decided that the Governor's office would be the appropriate place but Mr. Perkins at once saw the indelicacy of that. Courteney Doane's letters still lay in the wire baskets, and an extra scarf was hanging from a hook on the closet door.

"He should take the oath at his old desk in the council chamber," Mr. Perkins said. "Then to-morrow, after the Governor's office has been prepared and his secretary has had an opportunity to go over the papers, it will be proper for Mr. Griffin to enter."

"I've seen his face before," a reporter said.

"It's Asa Perkins," I volunteered. Observing that I seemed to know the Governor well, the newspaper men began plying me with questions as to how the news reached Mr. Griffin, what his first words were, all the incidents of the drive. We had tried to dissuade Mr. Griffin from attempting the trip until morning but he believed it his duty to call at the State House without delay. His first words had been rather reproachful and, inasmuch as they were directed partly to me, unjust.

"You got me into this," he said. "Now see what's happened." I had not then learned the full value of discretion but I had enough of my wits about me not to repeat that remark to the representatives of the press. Every five minutes a snow-covered messenger boy would dash in and out, and the reporters were in a feverish haste because it was already long after press time and all the papers were plan-

ning an extra which would contain an account of Mr. Griffin's taking the oath of office. One by one, the members of the party walked up the marble stairs to the executive offices and left their wraps on chairs in the inside corridor where the portraits of all the late ex-Governors except one were ranged along the walls. My nervous condition kept irreverent thoughts popping into my mind and I could not help but visualize what Mr. Griffin's portrait would be like, as painted by Fred's enthusiast for sheep and cows. The thought of Fred dismayed me and hurt my conscience, because we had reached West Everett before I had remembered we should have awakened him. I was afraid he would never forgive us for having left him behind, thus robbing him of what might have been the high spot of his life. The whole performance was the result of his handiwork, and now Mattie, as the Governor's oldest daughter, blandly pregnant, would have to stand beside her father, as his official hostess. Or should it be Mary, a minor, but still named Griffin? The secretary of state, for the first time, showed the faint suggestion of a smile. He was talking in an undertone to Mr. Perkins.

"There isn't a Bible in the place," I heard him say, and I realized they had been searching energetically for something. The Herald man grinned.

"Now, boys, for God's sake," said the secretary, an experienced politician, "forget this, just this one time. I could never live it down." The newspaper men promised not to mention the dearth of Bibles and one of them led me to the House locker room where we forced the door of the chaplain's locker. There was no Bible, but a half filled flask of brandy with which the chaplain used to clear his throat before his opening prayer. It was just what I needed, after three hours in a blizzard. If I had known what lay

before me I should have drained the flask. One of the watchmen finally produced a Bible from the engine room. The photographers set up their cameras in the council chamber.

The setting was impressive, in spite of the sad and comical aspects of the situation. Mr. Griffin, his throat tightly covered with his muffler, his face showing great fatigue, his head slightly bent, stood before his high-backed mahogany chair beneath the seal of the commonwealth, listening to the solemn oath which the secretary read. With his features inscrutable and his voice husky from the cold, he swore to uphold the Constitution of the United States, and the constitution and laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, to the best of his ability, so help him God, and the cameras clicked.

"Hold it just a minute, Governor," the Post photographer said. "Move your lips a bit. That's the stuff, thank you."

Mr. Griffin, bewildered, did exactly as he was told. Mr. Perkins, wily enough to see that he was not to be trusted for an interview, explained how ill the Governor had been and locked himself into the secretary's office with Mr. Griffin, promising a written statement for the press within a half hour. The statement was as brief as any of Mr. Griffin's speeches.

"The public calamity which has bereft Massachusetts of her Governor brings also to me an overwhelming grief at the loss of a friend. At this moment I am forced to devote my entire attention to the unforeseen responsibilities which have fallen upon me, believing that only by conscientious application to the duties which Courteney Doane would better have performed can I fittingly express my respect for his memory."

"The old boy's there," the Transcript man said as he glanced rapidly over his copy.

The city was still dark and the snow had turned to sleet which coated the walls of the buildings and encased the limbs of the trees. The sound of the wind was a steady drone and the State House seemed like a monstrous ship which was lost at sea. The assistant sergeant-at-arms offered to make up a bed for Mr. Griffin in the building but the latter admitted that his temples were throbbing and that it was hard for him to swallow. Mr. Perkins suggested that we get him a room at the Bellevue Hotel, just across the street, and swear the clerk to secrecy, so that the Governor might sleep as long as he could. It was impossible to get to Eastford or anywhere else. Street railway service had been suspended, wires were down or were spluttering as the wind blew them into contact, streets and sidewalks were blocked with snow and ice. Mr. Griffin consented to go to the hotel and we led him through corridors and out into the storm, past the Hooker statue which was an amorphous mass of ice, and into the Bellevue lobby. As I was cautioning the clerk that Mr. Griffin's whereabouts must not be disclosed, a large, red-faced man, bundled up in a reefer and wearing a heavy cloth cap pulled over his ears, came staggering in. His legs were weak from fatigue and his clothes as rigid as a diver's suit. He got his breath with difficulty, came to attention and saluted Mr. Griffin.

"I am sorry, sir," he said, "to be so late. I had to walk from Roslindale."

I was obliged to ask a bell boy who the newcomer was and learned he was the Governor's bodyguard, who had to follow him wherever he went. Mr. Perkins engaged an adjoining room, so that the officer would not have to stand in the corridor all day, and we all went up in the

elevator. The bodyguard had a genial round face which was glowing from the heat and the exertion of his ten mile walk against the wind.

"You better let me call a doctor," Mr. Perkins said, but Mr. Griffin replied that he would be all right after a little sleep.

I WAS exhausted but did not feel that I could go to sleep. The night's performance had been too strange for me. Mr. Perkins' club was just a block away, and he invited me to go there, but instead I turned down Park street, holding to the windowsills and doorways to keep my feet in the storm, and mounted four flights of stairs to our office, where the iron radiator was hissing and grunting in its morning ordeal of getting under way. Yet it did not seem like morning. I looked above the roofs of the buildings on Tremont street. The darkness appeared to have dissolved a little and as the dawn asserted itself the ice-swept city came to light in terms of dull silver and gray. The grave-stones looked bulged and distorted.

Ever since entering the university I had lived on Beacon Hill, passing its monuments, public buildings, hotels and incongruous residences with slight attention. Except for two or three perfunctory calls, I had never been in the State House and the well-dressed old ladies who had sat in the corridors of the Bellevue had appeared like pages from old magazines. I knew the bars, a book store or two near the Court House, my furnished room on Pinckney street, and the office. That was all. Inexplicably, in a single night, my destiny and that of my friends had become entangled in that network of public offices from which were

swayed, in a way I failed to understand, the affairs of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Just what was the Commonwealth of Massachusetts? I asked myself. I knew in a general way how it had been colonized, settled, fought over and subdivided; how it had gained independence, battled for this or that, developed commercially, diversified racially, and changed its aspects from decade to decade. I knew the names of its towns and famous men, its influential firms of bankers or manufacturers, but I had not the slightest idea of the functions of the horde of busy people who swarmed the rooms and corridors beneath the gilded dome of its capitol. The Governor had pledged himself within my hearing to carry out its laws, and as little as I knew about them I was aware of their intricacy and vagueness, their oppressive clauses which were overlooked by common consent, their lax openings through which criminals and corporations were able to drive in and out as easily as they entered Boston by means of Commonwealth avenue. I went to Mr. Perkins' room to gaze upon the shelves of Revised Laws and Acts and Resolves of the General Court and opened a volume at random.

"Common pipers and fiddlers," I found, were subject to arrest and imprisonment, and I could not help smiling as I thought of Mr. Griffin, in a tall silk hat, looking sternly from the State House balcony as a herd of violinists and their trulls were driven in chains to the Charles Street Jail. The next chapter had to do with the use of benzoate of soda as a vegetable preservative. Another permitted the mayor and city council of Fall River to take special measures for exterminating rats. Doubtless there were heads of departments to keep the state clear of stray musicians, chemicals and rodents, but I wondered to what extent Mr.

Griffin would be willing to delegate his duties. In the organ factory, he prided himself upon knowing everything that was going on and already as lieutenant governor he had given considerable trouble to the good-natured clerk of the Governor's Council by taking home documents to read and by asking questions in meeting which could not be answered. For him to swear to support three shelves of laws, so help him God, was not the trivial affair it might have been for me or for Mr. Perkins, or the late Courteney Doane, for that matter. I am sure the late Governor would not have minded my reflection that he had been a most astute and assiduous politician and, night or day, had never lost sight of the welfare of the Republican party. Suppressing pipers and fiddlers, I felt certain, would be a mere pastime compared to keeping peace between the factions of the speaker of the House and the president of the Senate. Already I had leanings in favor of the House because of the quality of its chaplain's liquor.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts, whether it was a collection of adjoining parcels of real estate, a pact between three million men who did not know each other, an accumulation of droll traditions, or just a place where inhabitants received their mail, would worry along, no doubt. I was not concerned with it, but with Mr. Griffin. My affection for him had been strengthened through the hours of that night. I believed he would acquit himself well of any executive task, but at what cost to himself? The redeeming element was Mr. Perkins' splendid background and unfailing sense of proportion and of humor. Already it had become apparent to me that he would really direct whatever governing had to be done. Perhaps the speaker of the House would take over Courteney Doane's ambitions for the United States Senate, leaving the president of the

Senate and his firm of lobbyists free to ransack the state. I had no objection whatever, as long as Mr. Griffin eventually got back to his home and family in good health and spirits. But he would have to serve the unexpired term of Courteney Doane, about six weeks, and then one year for which the late Governor had been reëlected.

My mind works quite erratically under conditions of stress. Instead of feeling depressed, I was aware of a mild exhilaration, due no doubt to tired nerves. Independently of my conjectures, the city got laboriously under way, as much so as the storm would permit. A few pedestrians leaned against the gale at perilous angles on Tremont street, the janitor knocked on my door to inquire if the heat was satisfactory. He asked me if I had heard about the Governor's death.

"I don't see how a man can eat soft-shelled crabs," he said. "They look like spiders."

I asked him if he would bring me all the morning papers, and in ten minutes he appeared with a sheaf of them. This time he was white from head to foot.

"It's turned to snow again," he said. "No let-up to-day."

As fantastic as the night had been, the accounts of its events had a quality much more baffling. That was my first opportunity to witness and take part in a series of experiences and later to rehearse them in terms of print. I was not merely astonished but fundamentally stirred. All literature and history took on new significance for me by drifting into a peculiar realm of its own, completely disassociated with what I had loosely thought of as reality. Set off by large headlines and by photographs of nearly every one and everything but the soft-shelled crabs were the stories of Governor Doane's sudden death and of Mr. Griffin's drive through the stormy night to take up without delay

the reins of state government. In the intervening hours, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts had floundered without a rudder. First was stressed the heroism of the station agent who had remained at his post long after the hour at which it was probable that he would receive a message, then had exposed himself to frost bite to deliver the fatal telegram. My turn came next, as a prominent young member of the bar and lifelong friend of Governor Griffin, watching by the sick-bed. The three hour struggle in the face of the storm ensued, in which great liberties were taken with geography and wind direction, and the minor climax in which Mr. Griffin, so weak from illness that he could scarcely stand up, forgetting all the glories which awaited, paused to care for his faithful pair of thoroughbreds, unwilling to trust them entirely to the groom. Charley, I deduced, was the groom. Mr. Griffin, according to the account of the reporter who had suggested the battle-flag episode, paused in the Hall of Flags to salute the standard of his regiment which had been decimated at Chickamauga. He had taken the oath on the old Ben Butler Bible. Next came the statement, which he had delivered with bowed head, before being carried by his friends to a nearby hotel where his family doctor and two eminent consulting physicians were attending him.

"The public calamity which has bereft Massachusetts of her Governor brings also to me an overwhelming private grief at the loss of a friend," it began. And several editorial comments called attention to the simple, touching words which Governor Griffin, known to be so sparing of language, had uttered from the depths of his heart.

I read each account from beginning to end, and decided not to go to bed at all, for fear of missing Mr. Griffin's reaction to his first avalanche of public praise and to the

pleasant imaginative touches by which the stories varied from one another and from what I had supposed to be the facts. I made a mental note that I should buy a dozen large-sized scrapbooks for Mary. I was still rereading the papers when Mr. Perkins came in. His words were jocular enough, but something in his attitude told me that he did not share my amusement at what was taking place, for he was always annoyed at the faintest prospects of work, and particularly in behalf of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, the cares of which had always passed him by so lightly.

AT ten o'clock I called at the Bellevue to ask for news of Mr. Griffin. The plain clothes man was sitting in the room next to that in which the Governor was sleeping, with the door slightly ajar.

"He hasn't stirred yet," he said to me and I sat down in an armchair nearby to wait. I noticed that the officer seemed anxious to talk.

"You're a friend of the Governor?" he asked.

"I've known him quite a while," I replied in a whisper.

"I wonder if he has any special friends on the force," he said. "I've been on duty with Governor Doane since last January."

He hesitated and I guessed what was on his mind.

"I'm sure Mr. Griffin won't make any unnecessary changes," I said. "He's not likely to disturb things."

The officer showed great relief. He looked like a trustworthy capable man.

"I know all the reporters," he said.

"Don't let them bother the Governor this morning," I suggested.

The officer's anxiety about his job had started me thinking again. It had not occurred to me before that thousands of men depended directly upon the Governor's good will for their employment and that his appointments carried

with them salaries, honors and prerogatives which made him the continual butt of office seekers and their friends. I remembered dimly that Mr. Perkins had grumbled at Courteney Doane's choice for certain judgeships.

Mr. Perkins and I had breakfasted at Young's and had agreed that we must stand by to help Mr. Griffin get his bearings. About noon, he awoke and I sat with him in his room as he ate his breakfast. He showed signs of pain when he swallowed his food, but said he was feeling better. The fact that he was Governor had not fully impressed itself upon him. Then he saw the papers.

"Why, there's some mistake here, Frank," he said. "I never had a doctor in my life. And they make out I was at Chickamauga. This will all have to be written over again."

"Don't try to correct it, Governor," I suggested. "It might be worse the second time."

He looked hurt when I addressed him as Governor.

"But it isn't true," he said. "They ought not to print what isn't true."

"They had to do it in a terrible hurry," I said, to comfort him. "But you must be careful what you say to the reporters. Always have some one write it out."

"Where's Asa?" he asked. "It's going on noon and I suppose I ought to have been in the office long ago. What time do the State House people go to work?"

"The offices open at nine o'clock, but you can get there when you feel like it. You must take it easy," I said.

"If I'm drawing pay I shall have to set the right example," he answered. I saw he was utterly in earnest.

Mr. Perkins, who entered at the moment, dissuaded him from going at once to the State House. The first thing to do, he said, was to decide upon a secretary, a man who could be trusted to look after the details of administration

and above all, keep callers from taking up Mr. Griffin's whole time. To my amazement, Mr. Griffin looked at me and before he spoke I had no doubt what he intended.

"You'll take care of that, won't you, Frank?" he asked.

"Just the man," said Mr. Perkins, who carefully kept his eyes from the range of mine.

"I don't know the first thing about politics," I said. "I never even voted until last year."

"The fewer politicians you have around, the better, Elijah," Mr. Perkins said.

"And what office are you going to accept?" I asked with some asperity.

"I can do more from the outside," he said. "Don't worry. There'll be plenty of work for all of us."

It was decided that I should go on ahead, to ascertain whether the Governor's office had been made ready. Just as I was about to leave, Mr. Griffin caught sight of the plain clothes man in the next room and remembered having seen him before.

"Who's that and what does he want?" he asked.

"He's your bodyguard," Mr. Perkins explained. "It's his job to follow you wherever you go."

"I have always looked after myself," Mr. Griffin said, testily. "There's no need paying a man just for watching me."

Through the doorway I could see the horrified expression on the face of the officer, but Mr. Perkins came to his rescue.

"It's customary," he said. "I believe it's the law."

"I shall have to read the laws," Mr. Griffin said. "I ought to do that right away, if I've got to support them. You know them, of course, Asa?"

"Nobody in Boston knows them better," I said. I did not feel as facetious as I had in the early morning but I could

not resist revenging myself upon Mr. Perkins for his ready endorsement of me as the Governor's secretary. I wanted to be of service, if I could do so without too much work, and I surely wanted to observe the details of this extraordinary governorship, but the fear I had always had of salaried positions and big buildings could not be dissipated in one night and day, however eventful. Still Mr. Griffin's naïveté aroused all my protective instincts.

"You can ask Mr. Perkins any question at all about the laws," I said in parting. "I wouldn't even take the trouble to read them."

"Oh, I shall have to do that," Mr. Griffin said. "You can tell them I'll be right over."

I found the executive offices crowded with expectant men through whom I had some difficulty in making my way until one of the reporters recognized me. He introduced me to the colored messenger, the secretary to the Council, and the other employees who had taken refuge in the inner office which I was destined to occupy. Nearly every one in the corridor was a stranger to me, but I vaguely recollected having seen some of the faces at the Republican convention. A buzz of expectancy arose when I was admitted to the inside room, where I found Fred waiting eagerly. While the messenger was in the room, Fred wore a grave expression, through which the glee broke forth the moment we were alone. He shook my hand, too excited to speak.

The colored messenger seemed to be extraordinarily tactful and efficient and I looked to him for the information I needed so badly.

"How is the Governor this morning?" he inquired.

"He's better. He will be here soon," I said. "Is the office ready?"

"Yes, indeed. He will find everything in order," the mes-

senger said. His name, I learned, was Jefferson Rush and although forty-five years old he was pursuing a course at an evening law school.

"There's one thing on my mind particularly," Mr. Rush said to me. "Governor Doane's Thanksgiving proclamation has been prepared and was all ready to go out, but in view of what has happened it will have to be changed and it is very late already to make the proclamation. Do you suppose Governor Griffin would be able to attend to that to-day?"

"I will take it up with him," I said, and thanked Mr. Rush. "And I would very much appreciate it if you would call any pressing business to my attention. Governor Griffin was entirely unprepared..."

"We all were," said Mr. Rush, with just the right amount of sadness.

I liked Mr. Rush, and I was equally at ease with the other members of the executive staff. Their manners were gracious, they appeared to know just what should be done and just how to do it. I assured them, as I had previously told the plain clothes man, that the Governor had no intention of changing the personnel. They all were pleased and grateful. The murmur outside rose quickly to a clamor, then hushed. I saw through the doorway that Mr. Griffin and his bodyguard were walking briskly through the corridor. He seemed astonished that so many people were gathered there. A camera man stood on a chair and snapped him as he passed. The moment he reached the inner office, I saw how tired he was and how bewildered. I closed the door, and he and I sat alone in the spacious room, he fumbling with the paper cutter and I looking at the portraits on the walls.

"Are all those people waiting to see me?" he asked with dismay. "You see, I should have been here early this morn-

ing. I suppose business piles up fast. Shall I see them, or read the laws?"

The Revised Laws and the Acts and Resolves of the General Court were ranged in leatherbound volumes on a series of shelves behind him.

"Governor," I said....

"Don't talk to me as if I were President," he broke in.

"...Most of the laws are in those books just behind you. The legislature comes in about the first of January, so before you get very far with your reading, they will be sending you more each day to sign."

"You don't mean to say so, Frank," he said. "What shall I do?"

"You better depend on Mr. Perkins for legal advice, as you always have," I suggested.

"Still, it doesn't seem right," he said. He took down a volume of the revised laws and opened to a chapter on the allocation of toll bridge fees between town, county, state, and private owners. "I can't make it out at all," he admitted. "I ought to resign."

"You can't," I said. "That's in the law, too." I wanted to tell him his predecessor was no mental giant, and surely no lawyer.

The quiet years I had spent in Mr. Perkins' office seemed already to have drifted back away from me and to have left me marooned upon a neatly upholstered island. In order to occupy Mr. Griffin's mind, I told him I had consulted with Mr. Rush, who knew all about the state affairs, and that out of respect to the late Governor all business should be suspended until after the funeral, which, I remembered as I was speaking, we must attend. I had never been to a funeral in my life.

"There's only the Thanksgiving proclamation," I added.

"That ought to be sent out in advance, for publication just after the funeral."

Mr. Griffin never joked, but the mention of Thanksgiving brought to his face a hunted expression which was so incongruous that he almost smiled.

"You'd better fix it up," he said. "I'm no good at writing speeches."

"The proclamation will pacify the newspaper men," I suggested. "Tell them you can say nothing of your plans until after the funeral." Already I was grateful for the lull which the obsequies would provide.

"Why, I saw them only last night," he said.... "They ought to be more careful."

I left him alone for a while, in order to compose a proclamation, which proved more difficult than I had anticipated. The spirit of thankfulness and of mourning were stubborn about combining and none of the proclamations of former years seemed to fit the case. Whenever the door was opened, I saw Fred shaking hands and condoling with some one outside. I was about to call him in for suggestions on Thanksgiving and bereavement when by some odd trick of mental association I remembered Mr. Perkins' prayer, delivered at the table just before our first meal together at Eastford. By addressing my old friend's phrases to the Deity, through the people of Massachusetts, instead of directly, I was able to make them serve. I snatched a piece of stationery at the top of which was the seal of the Commonwealth, beautifully embossed in blue and gold, and wrote:

"Since it has long been the custom for the Governor of Massachusetts each year to set aside a day on which the people may unite in rendering thanks to Almighty God, I

hereby designate for that purpose Thursday the twenty-eighth day of November.

"To the prayers of our ancestors let us add in humbleness our own acknowledgment of the gifts of the pasture, the orchard and the vine. Let us join in praising God for the sun which at His behest has shone upon us, for the rain with which He has gently replenished the earth. Let us ask His pardon if we have condoned injustices, or have feasted while others among our brethren starved.

"For the inspiring memory of those whom in His divine mercy He has taken from us let us also give thanks and let our earthly griefs be tempered by the knowledge that our blessings here are as mist to reflect the joys of His celestial kingdom."

Mr. Rush supplied the formal ending and I handed the proclamation to the stenographer to be copied and duplicated for the press. Mr. Perkins came in as I was reading it over.

"Not bad at all, Frank," he said, forgetting entirely that he was the actual author of it. "You have talents which you have kept hidden from us."

"The Governor is upset because he can't understand the toll bridge laws," I said. "He is going to take everything hard."

"I think we should go to Eastford with him to-night, if the trains are able to run that far," Mr. Perkins said. Fred came in and hearing the last remark said that the snow-plow had broken the track the whole length of the Saugus branch. I noticed nothing unusual in his manner at the time but afterward it seemed that I should have sensed his anxiety that we make the trip. It was four o'clock already. The hours of the afternoon had passed swiftly. As I was

about to knock on the Governor's door to suggest that we all take the five-fifteen train, Mr. Rush entered hurriedly. I heard another commotion in the corridor.

"The Mayor of Boston has come to pay his respects," the messenger said. By his tone I knew that the Governor should receive him.

"Come right in, Mister Mayor," Mr. Rush was saying and he introduced me to Mayor O'Rourke, who was dressed in a black swallow-tail coat and held a silk hat in his hand. I in turn presented Mr. Perkins and Fred to the Mayor. Mr. Griffin, when he was informed the Mayor was outside, started to leave his desk and come out to greet him. Mr. Rush glanced at me deferentially but somehow conveyed his surprise. I caught on quickly.

"Don't go to meet him. Wait for him here," I suggested. "It is not your personal dignity but that of your office which demands a certain etiquette."

"Are you sure I can't resign, Frank? Ask Asa, to be certain," Mr. Griffin said.

The Mayor and his secretary entered, the former expressing suavely the shock which Governor Doane's sudden death had dealt him and the comfort he had derived from the knowledge that the state's affairs would be handled by a capable business man who was familiar with the needs of municipal governments. Mr. Griffin shook hands and said nothing at all, for in such an exchange of compliments he was hopelessly lost. The reporters had edged in, and observed this silence which was not inhospitable because of Mr. Griffin's candid manner. As the Mayor was leaving the room he turned, and said casually to the Governor so that only Mr. Rush and I could hear:

"I did not intend to trouble you with Boston's difficulties at this hour, but the storm has hit us pretty hard. It's so

near the end of the year that our funds for street cleaning are just about exhausted. You will not object if I overspend a little? The legislature is strict with me."

"The snow and ice have got to be cleared away, of course," Mr. Griffin said. That seemed obvious to him. Again Mr. Rush's expressive countenance showed faint alarm. In my office a moment later he whispered:

"The Governor ought not to give these fellows any leeway. They're a slippery lot."

"My God, the snow has got to be shoveled before the legislature comes in," I said. He bowed apologetically and retired.

[IV]

AS the train pulled into Eastford, I was bewildered by the unusual brilliance of the square and the station platform. All the trees were coated with ice which reflected the gleam of a hundred torches. A cheer broke out when Mr. Griffin descended the steps of the only car besides the smoker.

"What's this," he said in surprise, and Fred's glee betrayed at once who had arranged the reception. Melzer was waiting with the double-seated sled and the geldings who had been rubbed, fed and treated like victorious athletes ever since their terrific pull to Boston. The snow had let up for an hour but a fitful wind kept the torch flames in agitation. Mr. Perkins and the bodyguard, whose presence was always confusing to Mr. Griffin, stepped to the platform. All the townspeople were waiting expectantly.

"You ought to say a word or two," Fred said. "They will be disappointed if you don't."

Mr. Perkins, feeling his friend's consternation, retrieved the situation. Standing upon the step and runner of the sleigh, he held up his hand in silence.

"Your Governor," he said, and could not forestall the burst of enthusiasm which followed.... "Your Governor," he at length repeated, "as doubtless you have read, is suffering from acute laryngitis." (Mr. Griffin involuntarily felt for his throat.)

"And so he has deputed me to convey to his neighbors his appreciation of the cordiality by which they are aiding him to face the grave responsibilities ahead. You have known Elijah Griffin too long, as man to man, to expect that honors will in any way alter his feeling for his friends. A man of his qualities cannot be truthfully said to be a common man . . . (The cheers burst out again) but his excellence lies in his plain humanity and is such that high office will cause it to expand and not to contract. Shake Governor Griffin's hand as ever when you meet him! Ask about his health and his family, as you have been doing these thirty years! And be sure that he will render his larger stewardship as faithfully as he has helped direct the affairs of the town of Eastford in the past."

"For mercy's sake, Asa," whispered Mr. Griffin hoarsely. He would have liked to hide but the crowd marched in double file behind the sleigh, waving their torches and singing, "Glory, glory, Hallelujah," past the livery stable and the grocery store, across the tracks and by the Congregational Church and all the way down the lane, where the trees formed a natural archway of glittering ice.

In the hallway, the plain clothes man hesitated as we all took off our wraps and entered the living room. Mary, too excited to notice the stranger, threw her arms around her father's neck and he held her there a moment, forgetting us all. Such demonstrativeness was most unusual with him.

"Take off your things and come in," he said to the detective, remembering his duties as host at last. "Mr. McGovern, this is my daughter Mary."

"I'm pleased to meet you, Miss," the officer said. He entered the living room but stood stiffly in a corner by the window and was noticeably ill at ease. Just before we were called into dinner he got me aside and said:

"If there's a restaurant handy, perhaps the Governor will excuse me while I eat."

I was certain a place was being set for him in the dining room and counted the plates to be sure.

"The Governor expects you to eat at his table," I said, and McGovern looked quite miserable.

"I'll get a bite in the kitchen," he said. "The Governor is very kind, but he's not used to everything yet. It wouldn't be just right for me to mix with the family."

Mr. Griffin was troubled when I tactfully suggested this to him.

"It's all so complicated," he said.

"McGovern appreciates your courtesy, but perhaps he would be uncomfortable," I said, and Mr. Griffin consented to conform to the usual practice. "I don't need a man to take care of me, anyway," he repeated, almost doggedly. "I'm not so helpless as all that."

"It's your position," I said. Words like that were beginning to flow naturally from me.

Every one was so exhausted that little was said at the table. Just before he went upstairs, Mr. Griffin said:

"I suppose we shall have to take the seven-twenty in the morning."

That gave me my most uncomfortable start. As his secretary I should undoubtedly have to accompany him and through whatever slight vicissitudes I had experienced since entering Mr. Perkins' office I had preserved my morning leisure. I borrowed an alarm clock from Charley, handling the unwholesome device gingerly. Joe met me in the hallway and followed me into the living room.

"Don't say anything to father about the business," he said, visibly disappointed, but loyal. "I shall have to stay in the factory while he is so busy at the State House. I hope he

won't blame me for what happens." The fact that his father was Governor impressed Joe, if at all, unfavorably. He had Mr. Griffin's aversion to public notice of any sort. I was pleased that Joe had considered it his duty to spare his father extra worry and was trapped by my appreciation of his attitude into volunteering to broach the subject of the steel business as soon as Mr. Griffin's term had expired. I would have given a great deal to have recalled the words two minutes after I had uttered them, for they spun another tiny thread into my cocoon of responsibilities.

It is not merely that I suffer momentarily in being rudely aroused from sleep in the morning. I remember it unpleasantly for months or years. It seems like an insult which I have accepted from some unknown person without a manly retort. I ate a too-heavy breakfast, my faculties benumbed, and sat with my eyes full of cinders, scanning the columns of the other papers as Mr. Griffin read the Morning Advertiser. Almost as much space was devoted to the late Governor Doane and to Mr. Griffin as on the previous day. This time there was a separate account of my appointment as the new Governor's secretary, with a reproduction of a photograph cut from a class picture of law school graduates. Mr. Griffin had risen from his sick-bed and quietly assumed his duties, I read. Having nothing tangible upon which to base a story, nearly all the reporters had given a detailed account of Mr. Griffin's interview with Mayor O'Rourke and commented upon the new Governor as a silent, thoughtful man. I was beginning to see ways in which his reputation for saying nothing would be helpful to us and resolved to nourish it. The rest of the paper was given over to the elaborate funeral arrangements for Courteney Doane and the ravages of the storm.

The weather stories fascinated me, for never before had I

taken any interest in news of that character. I had ridden through the worst part of the blizzard and had scurried back and forth on Beacon Hill without dressing in any unusual way, but now I learned that old men and women had died from congestion on the streets and their lifeless forms had been drifted over; that sea birds, propelled by the wind, had broken windows in three-story buildings; that simultaneously in Costa Rica colored laborers had succumbed to sunstroke; that numerous American cities and towns had established soup kitchens and free lodging houses; that an astrologist had prophesied the blizzard two years previously and had warned the wife of a man who had been lost at sea that a change was to come into her life; that trees, wires and sign boards had been blown down; that the cost to the Bay State Street Railway Company alone had been \$180,000.

We walked from the North Station to the State House and at the corner of Green and Temple streets had our passage blocked by a horde of most disreputable-looking men with snow shovels. They were not shoveling, but were talking rather listlessly, lighting clay pipes and banging their hands together to keep warm. A little farther up the slope we encountered a similar gang, and the narrow street behind the State House was almost clogged with shovelers. Here Mr. Griffin, who was walking ahead with Mr. Perkins and McGovern, paused.

"What are you men doing?" Mr. Griffin asked of one who because of a black derby and a bandanna handkerchief tied around his ears was somewhat conspicuous.

"Clearing the streets," replied the man, a bit testily. "Can't you see?"

McGovern's fist clenched but Mr. Griffin motioned him to restrain himself.

"Who hired you?" Mr. Griffin continued.

"Mayor O'Rourke, if you want to know," the man answered, as if he thought that would put Mr. Griffin in his place. The Governor said nothing, and went on. As I passed the group I heard the spokesman ask of one of his friends:

"Who is that little fish with the spinach?"

In spite of the confusion of the animal and vegetable kingdoms in the metaphor, I could not fail to realize that he meant Mr. Griffin.

"That's the new Governor, Elijah Griffin," I replied.

"Mother of Christ," said the man in the derby and in two seconds the snow was flying so fast on that and all adjacent streets that pedestrians had to abandon them entirely.

"Good morning," some one said at my elbow. It was one of the State House watchmen who had recognized me. "Did you see the gang of thugs O'Rourke has given soft jobs?" he continued. "Every storm brings him ten thousand votes." I recalled that Mr. Rush had tried to warn me of that and vowed that I would be more receptive to his suggestions forever afterward. The State House was practically deserted when we arrived but at nine, when it seemed to me the whole day must have passed, Mr. Rush and the others came in and were surprised to find that Mr. Griffin had preceded them.

"Should I come in earlier, perhaps?" Mr. Rush asked, but I felt no such practice should be encouraged.

"You should observe the usual hours," I said. "Mr. Griffin's only train brings him here too early."

A few minutes after nine o'clock the telephone rang and I reached for it clumsily. I had seldom had occasion to use one before and detested the idea of exposure to long distance interruption. The Mayor of Lawrence was on the line. He

was short of funds for street cleaning and the city was nearly paralyzed. The street lamps were still out of commission and there was a shortage of coal because of railway delays. Could he count upon the Governor's sanction if he exceeded the authorized appropriation?

"I think you should consult with the speaker of the House," I said. "He will say a word to the ways and means committee for you." That same day I passed the buck to the legislative department in the cases of New Bedford, Springfield, Worcester, Lynn and Fall River. I did not know at the time how wisely I was acting, for while I was busy at the telephone, I afterwards learned, the representative of a paper which was hostile to Mayor O'Rourke strolled down into the boiler room to kill time and chanced to meet there the watchman who had witnessed the snow-shoveling episode.

"The Governor certainly told those bums where to head in at," the watchman volunteered.

"Is that so?" the reporter said, appearing not to be too much interested. "Tell me about it." The watchman related how crowds of loafers on the city payroll had impeded the Governor's progress to the State House and how the watchful eye of the new chief executive had caught the leak through which public money was disappearing.

"He's not so dumb as he looks," the watchman said.

Mr. Griffin's appearance was not prepossessing, in comparison with the men who have become accustomed to holding public office but the descriptions of him which came to my notice nettled me as much as the heroic proportions he assumed in the press astonished me. I remembered that I had thought him timid at first, but I had not made the mistake of underestimating his character. At noon the reporters drifted into the executive corridor and Mr. Rush

told me that former governors had made a practice of seeing them all together, once each day. I gathered up several copies of the proclamation and went in to tell Mr. Griffin what was expected of him.

"But I have nothing to say," he objected. "I don't even know where to find postage stamps in this desk." He had written in longhand letters of condolence to the widow and the sister of Courteney Doane.

"They will ask you questions," I said, then suddenly had the presence of mind to warn him to be careful in answering them.

As the newspaper men filed in, I handed each one a copy of the proclamation. They made a few perfunctory inquiries about how Mr. Griffin liked the job, but his way of standing there uncomfortably without volunteering a word disconcerted them. After the others had left the office, I noticed that one man had lingered. He was the one who had been talking to the watchman in the boiler room.

"I understand you jacked up the shovelers a little this morning," he said. "They don't do much to earn their money, do they?"

"When a man is working he doesn't have to slap himself to get warm," Mr. Griffin agreed, and the reporter thanked the Governor for the interview and went out. Not long after lunch the afternoon papers were brought to me and across the front page of one of them I read a banner head:

GOVERNOR SCORES WASTE OF CITY'S FUNDS

New Chief Executive Assails O'Rourke for Street Cleaning
Scandal—Path to State House Blocked by
Paid Political Heelers

There followed an account of Mr. Griffin's remonstrance with the foreman of the men who had been hired at City Hall and his assertion that men shoveling have no need to stamp their feet and slap their shoulders to keep warm. A later edition contained a counter blast from the Mayor:

O'ROURKE CHARGES DOUBLE DEALING

Says Governor Griffin Encouraged Him to Clear
Streets, Sparing No Expense; Sad Time to
Play Politics, Is His Comment

Before I had time to decide how to approach Mr. Griffin with this news, three of the State House reporters were at the door of my office, indignantly protesting.

"That's no way to get publicity," the Transcript man said. "Why didn't the Governor let us all in on this at noon? What in hell do we care about Thanksgiving proclamations?"

I was irritated by the tone they adopted, not fully realizing how badly they had got left and the trouble they would have with their respective city editors.

"There's nothing to it," I said. "You all heard what he said to the Mayor. That's the only time he ever met him in his life." In my confusion, I forgot that the Mayor's casual allusion to street cleaning had been made to the Governor privately.

"Mr. Mahan is here from City Hall," Mr. Rush came in to say. The reporters crowded around expectantly, but I asked them to leave us alone as Mr. Mahan was ushered in, promising them a complete statement and another interview with the Governor. I had expected a rather hostile greeting, but Mr. Mahan, the Mayor's secretary, shook my hand and smiled broadly.

"Well, the old boy certainly put it over," he said, nodding in the direction of Mr. Griffin's room. "He's a smooth one all right. Butter wouldn't melt in his mouth."

I tried to cover my bewilderment by reading the open letter.

"To His Excellency the Governor:

"Reluctant as I am to engage in a political controversy before the remains of your honorable predecessor have been interred, I feel it my duty to ask you to confirm in writing the verbal approval you granted me yesterday to exceed as I saw fit the authorized appropriation for street cleaning, in view of the existing emergency.

"Respectfully,

"MICHAEL O'ROURKE."

"He's brighter than he looks," Mr. Mahan continued genially, still gazing at the closed door of the inner room. "Just after election, too."

AT eleven o'clock in the morning, the day before Thanksgiving, a slight middle-aged man wearing the uniform of the Salvation Army, accompanied by a rather pale woman whose coat and skirt were blue and whose wistful face was shaded by a bonnet, entered the executive offices and were welcomed by Mr. Rush.

"The Governor is ready," he said.

Mr. Griffin, Fred Atwell, McGovern and I came from the inner office, dressed for the street, and were introduced to Major Loftus and his wife. Since it was but three minutes walk to the Army headquarters on Green street, Mr. Griffin had not ordered the sleigh which was kept for his use in a stable on Chestnut street. As we were leaving the State House, the reporters who had been assigned to cover the event overtook us and trooped along behind. The snow had been cleared from the streets but the sky was gray and the air bitter cold. Again I noticed that Mr. Griffin did not seem to mind it, while Fred and I were rubbing our ears and shivering. Since the cold snap I had bought a suit of heavy underwear but after itching atrociously for one hour had taken it off and given it to the janitor of our building on Park street.

For two hundred yards along the sidewalk before the Army headquarters was a line of men and women, waiting,

many of them scantily clad and suffering from colds and rheumatism, nearly all of them furtive and impatient. Because of the brisk pace set by Mr. Griffin and McGovern, I did not take particular notice of the crowd at that time, still I could not help but see McGovern become watchful and alert. There was no cheering, for I doubt if Mr. Griffin was recognized.

In entering the shabby hall, however, I saw upon a streamer of white bunting, stretching from wall to wall above the rough board table, words which at once were familiar to me but which for a second or two I could not place:

LET US ASK *his* PARDON IF WE HAVE CONDONED INJUSTICES OR
HAVE FEASTED WHILE OTHERS AMONG OUR BRETHREN STARVED

Elijah Griffin

"That's fine," said Fred, and as he gripped my arm enthusiastically I saw tears in his eyes.

Salvation Army workers in uniform came into the hall and formed in double rows along the walls at right angles to the street, while Mr. Griffin and the rest of us were led behind the board table facing the doorway and were given kitchen chairs to sit upon. Outside the door a band began somewhat raggedly, for only the drummer could wear mittens. Eager voices, not exactly in tune, took up the song, getting together and coming out strong with the chorus:

*"Throw out the lifeline!
Throw out the lifeline!
Some one is sinking to-day."*

"Watch the Governor," a newspaper man whispered at my elbow. Mr. Griffin, accustomed to the song in church,

was singing with the others, his beard softly keeping the measure. At the conclusion of the song, the Salvation Army workers began bringing in large bundles and placing them upon the table. Each package had a verse of Scripture scrawled in longhand on the outside and was bound with red and gold twine. The sergeant at the doorway motioned the man at the head of the line to enter and a woman led him to the table at which the Governor was sitting. We all stood up as Mr. Griffin rose to his feet. By this time twenty-five or thirty of the poor were in the building, kept in single file by the police and the women in bonnets.

"Would you like to say a word, Governor?" Major Loftus asked.

But Mr. Griffin's eyes were upon the men and women standing before him. The face of the first comer was unshaven, his hands were trembling. An unpleasant odor came from his clothes, which were greasy and awry. The face, particularly, seemed to hold Mr. Griffin's attention. I realized afterward that he had never come in direct contact with poverty before. There were no destitute people in Rockport, nor in Eastford, and on his way to and from the organ factory the streets were so filled with commuters that except for occasional beggars, who really did well during rush hours, he had been face to face with few such derelicts. The man had a face which was molded to express brutality and desolation. It was broad, with conspicuous planes and areas set apart by lines which dirt accentuated. The eyes, because of the prospect of food before him, momentarily were enlivened by a sort of animal glee which made the rest of the countenance more incongruous.

"Would you like to say a word?" Major Loftus repeated.

"These folks need food more than speeches," Mr. Griffin said, but still with bewilderment, as if there had been some

mistake. The bum grinned and took the bundle which contained a Thanksgiving dinner. It had been the custom for the Governor to hand out only the first package, but Mr. Griffin showed no inclination to turn over his task to the Major, so the line kept shuffling along and as each one found himself or herself automatically at the head he came within the focus of our attention. As a matter of fact, I myself had never seen so many poor people together and was unfamiliar enough with their faces and their carriage to be deeply shocked. They were so distrustful and abject, so utterly cynical and ribald, wearing a mask of humility through which could be seen quite terrible eyes, watching like rats from the shadows of their holes! They stunk so persistently, and dragged along with them so many scabs and ailments, and they paid such eloquent inattention to the words upon the banner and the mottoes on the walls! They resembled in such an uncanny way the Salvation Army workers themselves, matching the fervor of the latter with a hidden sneer and wearing their rags like uniforms, that once more I lost for a time my sense of reality. I wished they had all been drunk and happy and understood that many of them had felt obliged to preserve sobriety for the occasion, in order not to risk being excluded from the hall. Not all of them had been temperate, however, and I must confess that my heart went out most freely to the ones who brought with them an aroma of whiskey, however vile. With those I felt a distinct kinship and as the women leered and joked behind their breath I hoped that in garrets and cellars, from Green street to the waterfront and all the way to the drug fiends' square on Columbus avenue there would be revelry that night, that the dinners Mr. Griffin handed out would be washed to famished stomachs by hogsheads of beer and whiskey, that common pipers and fiddlers would

come forth from their lairs to egg the roisterers on; that the hags, in their delirium, would recapture enough remnants of their former beauty to incite the most able of the men to deeds of wantonness and that those unable to partake would make free to howl and to watch. At last I remembered that Mr. Griffin had promised to return to the State House by half past twelve and his punctuality had become proverbial, together with his silence and common sense. On the way back I walked beside him, and actually guided his steps, for he was in a sort of daze.

"This can't go on, Frank," he said to me. "People can't live like that. There must be work for them, or shelter. Whose job is it to look after them, anyway?"

I imagined the headlines:

GRIFFIN SAYS POVERTY MUST STOP

Fred, who had planned to do the marketing for the dinner at Eastford just after the Salvation Army ceremony, caught up with us. He had given all his money away and had to borrow from his father-in-law.

"The boys are delighted," he said, meaning the newspaper men. "'It's the most dramatic thing I ever saw,' one of them said to me. 'The Governor's cheeks were trembling. By God, I believe he means what he says.'"

Fred's generosity had made me ashamed of myself and I resolved to spend the evening looking for the recipients of the bundles of food and offering to furnish what funds I could for the missing liquid ingredient. I knew that I should be roaring drunk myself. Something had given way inside my head. Perhaps by means of a hangover I could approach the sufferings of the poor and be more worthy to associate with them.

I found waiting in my office the state secretary of the Young Men's Christian Association. The late Governor Doane, it seemed, had promised to address a mass meeting the following Sunday evening, and the Y.M.C.A. officials were anxious for Mr. Griffin to take his place on the program. That suggestion threw me into deep dismay. If our Sundays at Eastford were to be encroached upon, really nothing of the life we cared about would remain. I took matters in my own hands, with an adroitness which was beginning to alarm me.

"I'm sorry," I said. "The Governor is in the midst of an important conference. I will give him your message, but I am afraid he will not consent, for it has been his lifelong practice to refrain from any activity whatsoever on the Sabbath. He attends church and spends the day with his family and nothing has ever dissuaded him from taking his day of rest. He considers it his pious duty." The Y.M.C.A. man was nonplused by this sally into his own territory and was maneuvered into a sympathetic disappointment.

"Another day," I said, "the Governor perhaps will address your society."

Governor Griffin's respect for the Sabbath got into print that same day, through I do not know what channels, but Mr. Griffin did not chance to read the statement of his principles. Since the initial clash with Mayor O'Rourke he had stopped reading any of the papers except the Morning Advertiser which was filled almost exclusively with commercial and shipping news.

"They mix me all up," he said to me. "I don't remember what has really happened after reading two or three different papers."

In the same way he missed the accounts of his conduct in the Salvation Army hall. It was the day on which a hu-

man interest story was expected and no touching detail was spared. Too moved to speak a word, the papers said, he had distributed Thanksgiving charity, joining in the song and letting his published words, which one editor suggested should be hung in all the schoolrooms, convey his earnest solicitude for the least fortunate of his people. About three o'clock, the chairman of the Republican state committee called, frankly jubilant. Before he entered the inner office he seemed anxious to speak with me.

"This stuff is great," he said. "The boys are all talking about it." (The "boys" in this case were the active members of the Republican party organization.)

"I would be careful, if I were you, not to go too strong on this Socialistic stuff. So far it's been just right. You're going to make the party more solid than ever, just when I was most afraid of a split. They'll all have to come into line, with such a popular governor. And next year's a Presidential year."

"Al" Baker, as the chairman was familiarly called, was equally appreciative of the O'Rourke episode, for unwittingly Mr. Griffin had extricated himself from that situation.

"I was not objecting to street cleaning," he had said almost apologetically, "but to loafing. The Mayor surely doesn't mind that. If he had been in my place, he would have done the same thing."

These words, delivered with the utmost candor, when published seemed to veil a clever and unanswerable sarcasm and, as one of the rival Democratic politicians had expressed it, had properly "smeared" O'Rourke.

"If you've never been in politics before," Al Baker said to me in parting, "we've been wasting one of the best publicity men the state has produced." My spirits sunk still

farther, but there was no way for me to explain myself. I closed the door of my office and asked Mr. Rush to stall all further visitors until after the holiday. His tact was really marvelous. Of course, when Mr. Perkins appeared, the messenger ushered him in without delay.

"Have you granted the Thanksgiving pardon?" he asked eagerly.

"My God, it slipped my mind," I said.

"Make it Joseph Poole," he said, and I began writing out the text of the pardon, following an old model the stenographer had on hand. On the day on which Mr. Griffin was hailed as the friend of the poor, he would not be too severely attacked for releasing a banker, I felt sure. It was frightful that I was no longer capable of a simple disinterested thought. One thing was tied up with another, and all with a cause for which I cared not at all but was destined to expedite, the triumph of the Republican party.

"Say, what does our party stand for?" I asked Mr. Perkins as the pardon was being typed.

"High tariff, I guess," he answered.

"What has that got to do with Massachusetts?" I persisted.

"Well, I'm damned if I know," he said. "Textile interests, most likely, and leather. I see Elijah pulled out the Vox Humana this morning. I almost wept myself."

"He takes things too hard," I said, again. "He's lost five pounds already." I did not mention that I had lost seven and a half.

"Let me take it in to be signed," said Mr. Perkins, reaching for the pardon. He was as happy as a boy. "This time it can't be ditched." A meeting of the Council had been called for four o'clock.

Seldom have I seen Mr. Perkins more elated than when

he left for the State Prison at Charlestown as the Governor's special messenger, with the pardon in his hand. Mr. Griffin had asked us both to spend the night at Eastford but we had declined, promising to be on hand in time for the huge family dinner at Fred's. Instead we had planned to sit in some quiet back room and try to regain our composure. Mr. Perkins found the warden, who had been waiting for a message but had not heard which one of his charges was to be set free.

"Joseph Poole," he said. "That's fine. I haven't seen him lately, but he deserves to get out. Prison life has never agreed with him."

He led the way through several corridors of cells, after consulting his memorandum book, and stopped before one numbered 432. A guard hastened to his side to find out what was wanted.

"Where's Poole?" the warden asked, for his knock had not been answered.

"Poole?" the guard repeated. "Let's see. I think he's in the hospital. He's been out of my section for six weeks."

Mr. Perkins followed out of doors and into the infirmary where the attendant took them to the ward where Poole was confined. They passed a row of cots on the pillows of which were shaven heads who watched them listlessly. Finally they brought up beside the one on which the pardoned prisoner was lying. Poole was sound asleep, his wasted features gray and his breathing almost inaudible.

"I hate to wake a man from peaceful sleep," Mr. Perkins said, "but in this case it will be worth it." And he touched the shoulder of the man in behalf of whom he had argued and stormed during five or six years. Joseph Poole's eyes opened, then closed again. He shifted his position and went back to sleep.

"Get up, Mr. Poole, and let me take you home for Thanksgiving," Mr. Perkins said, and some of the other prisoners sat up in their beds. They seemed pleased, for nearly every one in the prison liked Mr. Poole, although they found him rather quiet and serious.

"Get up, Mr. Poole," Mr. Perkins repeated.

This time the prisoner stirred and tried to lift himself with his elbows.

"Where must I go now?" he asked peevishly.

"Home, for Thanksgiving," Mr. Perkins repeated. He handed the prisoner the pardon, who held it unopened in his wasted hands. Then he began to scream. A doctor came running, in his haste overlooking the presence of the warden.

"How did you get in here?" he asked Mr. Perkins indignantly. "I gave orders that Poole should not be disturbed. He's a very sick man." The doctor reached for the prisoner's pulse.

"Some strychnine, quick," he shouted to a male nurse who appeared in the doorway. "No, make it nitroglycerine. And hurry."

Mr. Perkins miserably sat on a nearby cot and watched the doctor administer the hypodermic, then count heartbeats with his stethoscope.

"Oh, for God's sake," the doctor said. "He'll never come out of this. And I'll be stuck here all evening. . . . What business have you here, anyway?" he demanded again. Mr. Perkins pointed to the pardon, which the doctor unrolled indignantly and started to read. He did not laugh or cry, but he softened his tone and advised Mr. Perkins to go home.

"He may pull through the night," he said. But he knew there was little chance.

The last part of that Thanksgiving eve is a blank in my mind. I remember having dinner, somewhere, and of sitting in a booth at the Crawford House with Mr. Perkins on the opposite side of the table. Then the next thing I knew, I was bitterly cold, almost paralyzed in fact, and was sitting upon some stone steps confronting a building which looked vaguely familiar.

"This is the number, brother," said a woman's voice beside me. "Thirty-six Pinckney street. . . . Go in quietly and go to bed."

I turned around and recognized the door of my boarding house. Then I realized dimly that the speaker was a Salvation Army girl.

"God bless and keep you, brother," she said, softly. "I am sure you are not a habitual drunkard and that you have loved ones anxious for you. Good night, and let whiskey alone."

As she walked away I gazed after her quite regretfully, for her mistake about the loved ones waiting had stirred in me an irreverent desire for company and as I went to sleep I was thinking more about converting her to my ways than of restricting myself to hers.

IT was most annoying to Mr. Griffin, as well as to me, that no sooner had we grown a bit accustomed to the State House and its problems than business had to be suspended for about a week while the legislature opened its session and the inauguration ceremonies took place. With the help of Mr. Perkins, we prepared and had printed the Governor's message to the General Court and took care to make it the shortest address with which incoming senators and representatives of Massachusetts had ever been greeted. All during December, we received so much advice, both direct and indirect, that we were almost obliged to disregard it all. The state committee was worried for fear that a hint of radicalism would creep in to give fanatics a foothold; the heads of departments, vaguely troubled by the snow-shoveling incident, scented with alarm a régime of strict economy. The newspaper men were on pins and needles for fear the text would leak out in advance and some one would scoop the crowd. I had had experience enough by that time to guard against that eventuality and had established rather friendly relations with the press. The regular State House reporters were a reasonable lot and when one of their number had disclosed that his information about O'Rourke's snow shovelers had come to him from an outside source the others begged my pardon for

appearing hasty and we all became friends. It was to them and to Mr. Rush that I really looked for counsel.

"Play up the Governor's notion about jobs for everybody who will take them, and an honest day's work for public employees," the Herald man said to me. "Recommend that New England's interests be considered as a whole in railroad legislation. It will take the different states so long to get together that you will have plenty of time to see how the land lies. And give them a good stiff paragraph on non-interference in municipal affairs. That will bring all the city rings into your camp."

"Who knows anything about taxation?" I asked.

"Not a living soul," he said. "Let it alone."

Mr. Perkins had an inspiration which saved us the task of investigating all the departmental recommendations.

"Owing to the sad and unforeseen circumstances under which I was obliged to assume the duties of Governor, it has been manifestly impossible for me to familiarize myself with the affairs of each department. The men at their heads have been carefully chosen by my predecessors, and I am transmitting their recommendations to the General Court without amendment, venturing only the suggestion that the ways and means committee give them special attention, having in mind the dangers of bureaucracy and the necessity of sparing the taxpayers unnecessary burdens. Business principles are, generally speaking, applicable to government and when they are departed from, the reason should be clear and specific," the draft of the message read.

The message was condensed to about a half dozen pages and contained little to which any person might object. While even I was aware that jobs for everybody and strict economy were not easy to reconcile, their clauses were so

widely separated in the text that only an extreme busybody would take the trouble to connect them, I thought. I proved to be right. I was pleased to discover, little by little, that the public cared more for the music of words than for intricacies of their meaning, an instinct I am not yet convinced is unsound.

On the opening day of the legislative session there was little for us to do except shake hands. Senators and representatives from up-state were anxious to meet Mr. Griffin and those from the western counties were very cordial. They expected at last that something would be done for the farmers. One of them told me so, and caused me, the moment he had gone, to phone Mr. Perkins.

"We've forgotten the farmers," I said. "And the message is already in print."

"Great snakes, have an insert run off this afternoon. Say it was so close to the Governor's heart that he left it for the last.... This will do:

"It is need which requires men to buy food products, but prudence which dictates that they shall raise them. Every farmer is a public benefactor and as such is deserving of the state's solicitude. While the forward march of our commerce and industry is encouraging, the commissary must not be neglected unless we are prepared to hear the bugles sound retreat. The door of my office shall stand open to the farmers, and the gate of my farm to other men who wish to see how they can advance their own interests and those of their fellows by means of the dairy and garden. Protect the farmer from unscrupulous competition, and encourage young men to remain on the land. Already the best manhood of the Massachusetts towns is being drained into the cities. Let us call a halt. (No, we have a forward march and a retreat already.) ... Let us not leave this com-

monwealth at the mercy of its neighbors in times of stress."

"Thanks very much," I said, feeling how close I was to errors and omissions every hour of the day. The printer promised to rush the job and that evening I had sent to every paper and news service in the state the full text of the message for release at noon the next day. I worked until one in the morning, an experience entirely new to me.

I had never seen an inauguration, but the clerk of the Senate was kind enough to instruct Mr. Griffin thoroughly as to what would be expected of him and it seemed rather simple. The ceremony was held in the chamber of the House of Representatives but since the senators, numbering forty, sat jointly with the House, and every member and state official had relatives and friends who wanted to be present, seating space was in great demand. The Governor had a portion of the speaker's gallery and several seats around the edge of the floor for his guests. It happened that Anne was in her father's house when he arrived with his sheaf of invitations, unaddressed, and Mr. Griffin did not realize that any one would care particularly to go, so he gave all but two or three to her, forgetting Fred and the Tewksburys. That same evening, Anne consulted with Mrs. Ebenezer Hoag and sent out the engraved invitations, embossed with the state seal, to a very select list of Mrs. Hoag's acquaintances who would lend tone to the occasion. Fred was frankly angry, but he did not complain to his father-in-law. I got him places for himself and Mattie, which were surrendered gladly by Charley and Joe, but when the speaker's gallery began to fill with haughty and distinguished women, Mattie, sitting in one corner, looked decidedly out of place, and feeling the inadequacy of her clothes and deportment, was particularly awkward when any one was presented to her.

At half past ten, before the House convened, a young woman from the Transcript who had got wind of the fact that Mrs. Bartholomew Hoag and the former Evelyn Crowningshield were related by marriage to the Governor, asked me for a list of his guests. I was stumped, but referred her to Mrs. Ebenezer who graciously provided her with whatever she wanted, forgetting quite naturally but not maliciously to mention Mrs. Frederick Atwell, the Governor's eldest daughter.

All the galleries were crowded, so much so that from the floor they seemed to be leaning forward. One by one the rows of desks, arranged in concentric semicircles, began to fill. The members of the Supreme Court and the members-elect of the state ticket gathered in our offices, chatting with one another and flattering Mr. Griffin, who was so confused with extravagant words that he could not remember the names or faces of the well-dressed men he met.

The extent to which medieval pomp had been preserved by democratic assemblies came to me as a distinct surprise, for I learned that before we could walk in to take our seats it was necessary for a committee to be sent across the building from the House to the Senate informing the latter that the former was in session and awaited the members of the upper branch to sit in joint convention. A committee from the Senate gravely marched in the counter direction to inform the House that the Senate would appear forthwith. After the senators, amid perfunctory applause, had filed in and had been ushered to their seats, election returns, four months old, were read them and a formal notice of the death of Governor Doane, whose funeral they had attended, was declaimed by the clerk of the Senate, acting as clerk of the joint convention. A joint committee was then sent in our direction to inform the Governor-elect

that the House and Senate were in joint session and respectfully awaited his presence. After they had returned, the secretary of state, an owl-like little man with horn-rimmed glasses and a falsetto voice, preceded by the sergeant-at-arms with his tall tufted hat and embroidered mace, was announced in the Chamber as

"A messenger from His Excellency the Governor."

"Admit the distinguished messenger," the president of the Senate replied, and the central doors were thrown open. Presently our procession got under way, Mr. Griffin and the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court in the lead, and the other dignitaries following. I brought up the rear, being the odd man and without a partner.

My sense of the dramatic was aroused, for the blurred faces in the overhanging galleries, the elaborately carved dais upon which the presiding officers were standing, the statesmen in black forming a wide sloping hemisphere, the brilliant central chandelier with a halo of lights on the vaulted ceiling and supplemented by softer globes of light on each of the pillars, offered a spectacle which was blurred by the bewildering lack of ventilation. Mr. Griffin, pale and nervous, looked smaller than usual beside the portly Chief Justice and the six-foot president of the Senate who administered the oath. He was greeted with spontaneous applause, however, and after the first paragraph of the message was able to make himself heard. Its brevity put an end to the ceremony before the stifling air had caused the women to faint, and the general impression was excellent.

"That's fine," said Al Baker, slapping my shoulder excitedly. "He didn't make a single break. That stuff about railroads was simply great. New England coöperation! That's a good one! We won't have to do a thing for years."

I felt some qualms about claiming credit for the railroad

policy but the state chairman was off and away before I could remonstrate.

What I did not know was that the Post had sent a photographer early that morning to Eastford, to take several shots of the gubernatorial mansion, and when next morning I read the account of what he found there I felt its authenticity. He had found no one in the house and so had strolled out to the barn where Charley was milking the cows.

"Where are all the folks?" the photographer had asked, mistaking Charley for a chore boy.

"Oh, they've gone to Boston," Charley replied.

"All of them?" persisted the photographer.

"There's some kind of a shindig going on," Charley said. "Dad's giving a talk, or something."

"Dad?" the photographer said. He nearly dropped his camera. "You mean the Governor?"

"Yeah," Charley agreed, and spoke reassuringly to the cow whose teat he was absent-mindedly holding.

"Well, you don't mind if I take a few pictures of the place?" the photographer asked.

"Not at all," Charley said, and singing streams of milk began drumming on the pail.

The Transcript, on the day of the inauguration, gave over its entire society page to the Treadwells and Hoags. There were photographs of Mrs. Ebenezer, Mrs. Bartholomew and Anne, who was described as the Governor's only daughter; a drawing of the original Hoag homestead in pre-Revolutionary days, a résumé of the life of Ellen Griffin (née Hoag) who had died in childbirth, and an announcement that Mrs. John Treadwell would take a prominent part in the current season's activities. Somehow, it made me angry, for since Anne had been married the

Hoags had left us all so beautifully alone and I was determined that if there was any technical justification for giving Mary the place of honor beside her father at the reception that night I would do so. Again I consulted the clerk of the Senate who knew nearly everything. If the Governor's unmarried daughter was eighteen years old, she should take precedence, he said. A similar case had occurred in 1829.

"Mary," I said, "the Hoags must not hog the whole show." Thus my last pretense of neutrality slipped away. "If there is any question about your right to receive, it could only be raised by Mattie and I will fix that with Fred."

So that evening in the Hall of Flags the society reporters were bewildered by seeing beside Mr. Griffin a tall young girl with a proud oval face and gray-blue eyes who took his arm tenderly and raised her eyebrows scornfully when Mrs. Ebenezer Hoag and her escort passed by. I felt nearly as conspicuous as the Governor, for it fell to me to escort Beatrice Tewksbury, whose hair and velvet gown made the older women look like water-color sketches.

"You're great," I said, as I helped her enter the carriage. And she rested her head on my shoulder and settled comfortably into my arms.

"I think it's wonderful the way you help Mr. Griffin," she said. "You're unselfish, Frank."

I could think of nothing adequate to say to that, so we rolled along Newbury street slowly, the horses slipping every now and then.

"I don't mind a bit your loving Mary," she said, and turned up her face to be kissed.

THE more pronounced the discords between the three now distinct households on the Griffin estate became, the harder the individuals concerned tried to conceal their ill feeling from Mr. Griffin. A third prospective Atwell grandchild was well under way, and on his birthday another ten thousand dollars would be deposited for education. The organ business was at a standstill and Captain Tewksbury was taking advantage of his prolonged shore leave to make up for convivial moments he had missed in years at sea.

It was not only the money earned so easily by Mattie which piqued her sister Anne, but sly remarks which certain of their acquaintances passed about her shirking a matrimonial duty. These innuendoes were no less embarrassing to John, who was so robust and hearty that he could not keep his cheeks from flushing whenever the subject of children came up. His wife, who at the time of her marriage had shown promise of ripening, had relapsed into a stringy state and her voice had grown more shrill and petulant. Having been brought up among society women, John was bored with it and would have given a large share of his profits on steel to burn his evening clothes and let well enough alone. Still, good-natured as John was, Fred's almost fatuous air of triumph at his wife's fertility

did not fail to get under his skin. When a remark attributed to Fred, to the effect that the Treadwells might have to call for help, reached John's ears he was stung into replying that the Atwells had evidently done so. Joe, made uneasy by Anne's rather elegant visitors, avoided her house in the evenings and was left to fret about the months which were slipping by and giving the steel business a start on him.

The first Sunday after the Governor's reception, Mary had calmly taken the place at the head of the table, and was served before her sisters Mattie and Anne. Fred had untactfully praised her appearance there, so that Anne's black eyes glowed malevolently and Mr. Perkins was forced to talk a continual stream to keep the peace. I was nearly dissolved by the cross currents of animosity which flowed from all directions through me. Also, I knew that Mr. Griffin was aware that several things were wrong. His inauguration and reception had gone off well except for one mortifying detail for which I blamed myself as well as the caterer. On the tables on which refreshments were spread in the executive offices, was an uncanny predominance of shellfish which the guests left almost untouched. Something always seemed to get by me, no matter how hard I tried. I had distracted the attention of reporters by reminding them of the hostess precedent in 1829, so that Mary's place in the morning paper was equaled only by that of her brother Charley, hitherto unmentioned in the public press.

At the time I read of Charley's having milked a cow while his father was swearing to uphold the Constitution and laws, I had felt an inexplicable discomfort. His picture was three columns wide, so clear that an expert could have said how near the cow was to being completely milked,

and beneath, in leaded type set two columns wide was Mr. Griffin's reference in his message to the farmer. Each article lent the other its influence, so that with the society angle, the brevity, common sense and sympathy for the poor, the publicity attending Mr. Griffin's address was surely the most diverse in the history of the Commonwealth. My disinclination to dwell upon Charley was aggravated at the awkward Sunday dinner by evident signs that he was seeking me out. Mr. Griffin also seemed anxious to speak with me privately, and I was glad to accommodate him to escape his farmer son.

"It's not good for the children, all this hurrah about the governorship," he said. "I wish you could keep things out of the paper."

I could not do less than promise to try.

"Even Mary lets it go to her head," he continued. "Perhaps it's natural to women."

"I'm sure it is," I said, comfortingly, but he looked more troubled than ever.

"Do you suppose you could take her to the theater once in a while?" he went on. "I'm too tired to go anywhere evenings and I don't want her to get too restless. She thinks a lot of you, Frank."

I tried afterward to recall his exact inflections, and decided that he had not intended to say more or suggest more than he had said. Of course Mary and I were fond of one another. Every one knew that. I must let Mr. Griffin know, definitely, I decided, that I was really not a lawyer nor anything else with a future. While fighting off a slight uneasiness on that account, I was cornered by Charley, who asked me to walk with him out toward the barn.

With each step Charley took, my misgivings increased. It was not necessary for him to tell me what had happened.

The news was written on his troubled face and I had been dreading it so long that its prospect of materialization relieved me in a way. I mean that it introduced a complication so unanswerable that everything suddenly seemed grotesque to me and not to touch me at all. That is one advantage of a weak character. One bears just so much, then life is comical. What by its absence had made Anne ridiculous, being present with Sue might throw the household into consternation.

"Frank," Charley said, at last, "I'm in the hell of a fix."

"But not an uncommon one," I said. "At least, not in the rural districts. I have been expecting it for some time."

"You have?" he said, alarmed. He had thought it was a secret.

"Well, don't be afraid to talk to me. We must get out of it, somehow," I said, to end my own suspense.

"I want to marry Sue," he said. "I've got to, in a way."

"I suppose she is willing," I suggested.

"She's afraid her father will break her neck," he said, in a tone which conveyed that he shared her apprehensions. I had even thought of that, months before. I began to blame myself, this time for non-interference.

"How much need you hurry?" I asked, and seeing he did not understand, made my inquiry still more specific.

"I don't know, exactly," he said.

"Does she?" I persisted.

"Not exactly," he replied.

"That's the first thing we must find out," I said. Already the boy was much heartened by my evident willingness to help him. Older people, he had always thought, had to be dealt with in a special way, but he remembered that I had helped release him from a life term in the grammar school and admitted me to the small company with whom

he spoke somewhat directly. I plunged in deeper each moment.

"You understand that a scandal would be terrible for your father just now," I said, and saw to what extent he did understand that feature of the situation.

"That's why we're afraid of Melzer," Charley said. "He'll take it out on Sue for worrying father. If father only had kept out of the State House, perhaps no one would have noticed."

"Your father had other plans for you," I said.

"I can't help that," said Charley.

Sue was in the carriage shed, in tears. I did my best to comfort her and told her above all things not to talk. At the same time, horrible possibilities were flitting through my mind. I should not have minded the chagrin of Anne or of Mrs. Bartholomew Hoag if Sue's not unattractive picture had been placed beside that of her prospective sisters-in-law, but the Governor's piety and his regard for young folks close to the soil had been so widely advertised that news of any irregularities upon his premises would be read not only in the state, but nationally — perhaps abroad. The whole Republican state committee would be forced to go into seclusion. I got the permission of both Sue and Charley to take Mr. Perkins into my confidence and arranged to meet the girl in Boston the following afternoon in order to take her with me to consult a physician. I cannot describe the feeling of guilt and embarrassment I experienced in entering the doctor's office nor the unconvincing way in which I tried to explain that I was not directly involved in the case. His verdict was not comforting, for the disaster was due to take place not later than the date set for the Republican convention in June.

"The little trollop," Melzer said, when Mr. Perkins told

him. "She takes it from her mother." But he showed no signs of violence and agreed to Mr. Perkins' plan. Sue was to be sent to Denver for her health and to remain there until the baby was old enough not to betray his badly chosen birthday. By that time, Mr. Griffin would be an ordinary citizen again and Charley could tell him about his secret marriage before Sue's departure, antedating it somewhat. Charley was reluctant to have Sue go out among strangers but nothing else could be done. We took the couple into Connecticut and witnessed the ceremony before a justice of the peace. Mr. Griffin was sorry that Sue was so ill and offered to pay her expenses to Denver, an offer that Melzer was afraid to refuse for fear that the ruse might be questioned. Melzer wept at the station and forgave his daughter, who agreed to write Charley special letters in care of our office on Park street.

"Now that is laid upon the table," Mr. Perkins said. We both found ourselves using parliamentary language on all occasions.

I hoped that no one would move to place it first upon the orders of the day.

THE enthusiasm of the Republican leaders for Mr. Griffin was given a severe jolt early in February. Up to that time there had been no really important appointments and he had reappointed the men who held minor offices and whose terms had expired. One afternoon Mr. Rush handed me a card which read:

GEORGE B. MEADOWS
CONSULTING BACTERIOLOGIST

Mr. Meadows was a modest middle-aged man of ordinary stature and alert dark eyes, and in asking for an interview with the Governor mentioned that he had known Mr. Perkins in Washington in connection with the fisheries dispute. I passed on this information to Mr. Griffin, who greeted the stranger cordially, and the Governor asked me to remain in the inner office during the conference. The subject Mr. Meadows brought up was the pollution of streams and rivers by waste from factories and was not new to me, since I had heard Mr. Perkins discuss it for hours on end. It was part of the national program in the interest of which he had remained several weeks in the Capital.

The state fish and game commissioner was an amiable

man, Mr. Meadows said, but he was more of a sportsman than a scientist. I learned upon investigation that he was more of a politician than either one. The salary was not large, but the responsibility was greater than the commissioner had any idea of, Mr. Meadows said. He produced carefully tabulated figures showing the extent of the damage caused by thoughtless manufacturers, spoke also of modern methods for artificial propagation of game and food fish, and convinced us both that the state was using up a valuable natural resource recklessly and that the loss to the public ran into substantial figures. I asked Mr. Rush to telephone Mr. Perkins, who joined us, and his confidence in Mr. Meadows won for the latter Mr. Griffin's complete regard.

"What should we do?" he asked.

"Appoint a competent commissioner," Mr. Meadows replied and Mr. Perkins nodded. "If Massachusetts should set the example other states would follow and national legislation could be obtained."

"Why don't you stop here a while and take the job yourself?" Mr. Perkins asked.

I am sure that Mr. Meadows had not had that in mind, but he was so much interested in his field and had tried ineffectually for so long to get a foothold that would enable him to demonstrate his methods that the idea appealed to him at once.

"It would mean a financial sacrifice," he said, "but if the Governor wishes it, I will accept the two-year term. The trouble is that I am not a resident of Massachusetts."

"Don't worry about that," Mr. Perkins said.

Still, Mr. Meadows asked for time to think it over, and the following Wednesday, when the former commissioner expected his name would be sent to the Council for ap-

proval of his reappointment, nothing happened. When he inquired about the delay, Mr. Griffin, armed with the statistics Mr. Meadows had prepared, explained that he believed a scientist was needed for the place. The commissioner could scarcely believe his ears.

It is difficult to say how such news travels, but before sunset, politicians started arriving from all corners of the state, and particularly from Bristol county, where Fish and Game Commissioner Quincy had been an active worker for years and was known to be a close friend of Congressman Moore. The latter sent a telegram from Washington quite peremptory in tone. That evening, Al Baker invited me to dine with him and explained his view of the situation.

"Meadows is a man of national reputation, second to none," he said, "and we all know that while Quincy is a good fellow, he knows little about fish. The point which I should tactfully suggest to the Governor is this: The Republican party, as a whole, means a clean administration. If its power is jeopardized, the state stands to lose hundreds of thousands of dollars for every one which may be saved in this instance on fish and game. Our machine has been built up carefully, over a period of many years. In politics one must give and take. Fidelity should be rewarded, even at slight expense to the public, if it can be instrumental in saving the people's money and upholding sound principles of government on a larger scale."

The argument sounded more convincing when Mr. Baker uttered it than when I retailed it to Mr. Griffin, who saw the state problems in less complicated terms.

"I never heard so many good reasons for doing the wrong thing," he said. "If men work for principles and parties

because they believe in them, what more do they want? And who is Congressman Moore?"

I had looked up Moore's record and had learned with some surprise that he had been elected as an independent and several times upon the floor of the House in Washington had attacked Republican leaders with the utmost vehemence. He had been one of the first men in Massachusetts to enter the automobile business, I was told, and had made a million.

"It's not a bad idea to have the so-called independents in line," Mr. Baker said. "Moore can swing Bristol county and if he calls himself independent, it's just as well, so long as he votes with the party when an emergency occurs. I'll admit he's a dangerous man, and that's all the more reason for keeping him satisfied."

"Elijah," said Mr. Perkins when we three were alone, "you let these politicians wail if they want to. The people are with you, so far. Do what you think is right."

"Will the Council uphold you?" I asked.

"That's their own lookout," said Mr. Griffin, but I decided to sound each member before a vote was taken. As soon as he could get to Boston from Washington, Congressman Moore appeared, in a belligerent mood. He was a square-faced man with beady eyes and a dimple in each cheek which made him look as if he were smiling all the time. He paid little attention to me and less to Mr. Perkins, but he brought Mr. Baker with him and we all gathered in the Governor's room for a conference.

"What's this I hear about Bob Quincy?" the Congressman asked. His jaw stuck out and he gripped his knees with his hands as if he were presiding and wanted no interference. I saw Mr. Griffin flush. His dislike for the

Congressman had begun when he heard he manufactured automobiles.

"He is incompetent and I have offered Mr. Meadows his job," Mr. Griffin said. His tone was unusually authoritative. Is it possible, I asked myself, that high office actually tends to make a man rise to its responsibilities? The state chairman was trying desperately to avoid an open clash.

"I haven't heard a word of criticism of Quincy," Congressman Moore retorted, and Mr. Perkins explained the problems which had been ignored and particularly the damage done by manufacturers.

"A lot of fanatics, these bacteriologists. I've seen them pussyfooting through the lobby in Washington. Who'll pay the increased prices if the manufacturers have to follow the whims of every Tom, Dick and Harry?" the Congressman asked.

"It would cost them very little to take these precautions," Mr. Griffin said. "I am a manufacturer myself."

"I thought you were a farmer," Congressman Moore replied.

"I am also Governor," Mr. Griffin said, rising quickly to his feet. "I will thank you to bear that in mind." I could have cheered aloud.

The reporters, who had sensed that something unusual was going on, were gathered near the door, and as Al Baker and the Congressman came forth rather abruptly, one troubled and the other in a rage, I saw the newspaper men follow them down the corridor. I believed Baker would be discreet but I had no such confidence in Moore. I have never so thoroughly distrusted a man on sight. As soon as I could get a chance to talk with Jim Brown, the Herald man, I explained the situation.

"Moore would throw rocks at his own grandmother,

he said. "You better give us the straight dope." And so I told him word for word what had happened. After the avalanche of public approval that ensued, not a member of the Council dared to vote against Mr. Meadows' appointment. On the day he was sworn in, the tremendous extent of the power in our hands came over me. Up to that time, our work had seemed more or less of a joke. I was anxious that it should continue to seem so, for all my observation and reading had confirmed my congenital belief that the greatest bores on earth are earnest men. I was afraid I had been tainted, and yet I was glad for the prospective purity of fish and streams. My recurring moments of excessive admiration for Mr. Griffin troubled me, also. Reading his message to the legislature, sincerely and without a trace of pompousness, he had appeared to me as being of larger spiritual stature than the men around him. I had experienced another such moment during our conference with Congressman Moore. Perhaps plain men were the best, after all, and yet I could not really think so, for it had been said too often. No doubt a knowledge of the science of government might be superfluous under changing conditions. For that matter, Mr. Perkins knew as much about governments, except our own, as almost any man in Massachusetts. His attitude toward Mr. Griffin was absolutely unchanged. He was too old and too wise to be a hero worshiper, and so I tried to borrow his wisdom and to retain my old conception of Mr. Griffin as a true and interesting friend. I came to understand, however, how it is that men become enthusiastic.

"Ten more months," I said to myself. "I hope he can stand it." For Mr. Griffin already showed the effects of continual strain.

Since I had deceived him about Sue and Charley, and

was always aware that he was counting upon possibilities that had long ago been snuffed out, I was somewhat uneasy and self-conscious in his presence. I was not sure he had not been secretly afraid of an entanglement between Charley and Sue. Perhaps he was even feeling relieved that the girl was so far away. My qualms did not constitute a rift between us, but tended to make me too solicitous. And Sue was so lonesome, never having been ten miles from Eastford before, that I was really afraid she would die. Charley, in spite of his drowsiness, scrawled long rambling letters to her in the early evenings, locked in his room, and I was obliged to comfort him after each sad note he received from her. He had plenty of physical stamina, and so had she, but I could not deceive myself about how little they were to be relied on in a case where a nervous reserve must be called upon. Besides, Charley had another problem on his mind that bothered him as much in a different way. All the other milk dealers had raised their price to six cents a quart and because Mr. Griffin was determined never to help destroy the convenience of the nickel, the dairy was losing money. Mr. Griffin had not a few such unimportant fixed ideas concerning which he was as firm as on other matters he was amenable to reason.

"Once you raise the price to six cents, it's easy to go on to seven. And prices never go back where they belong. They told us after the Civil War that things would be cheap again, but they never have come down," he said.

"Jesus Christ," Al Baker said to me, a little later, "I'm in hot water all the time. Cape, of the Cape Farm and Dairy Company, is one of our biggest contributors, and he came in this morning purple in the face. 'What's this grandstand play Griffin is making . . . five cents a quart. . . ?

'The little shrimp will ruin us,' he said. And I don't dare to butt in again. Can't you make the Governor see the light?"

I was quite sympathetic with Mr. Baker's attitude. He was the first man in the state, apparently, to feel the pangs when anything went wrong.

"The Governor is not easy to influence," I said.

"Pig-headed, you mean," he said. That was going too far, but I made allowance for Baker's mood and his actual sufferings. Then I had another of those flashes of political insight which secretly dismayed me.

"If I were you," I began, "I would play up the Governor's independence. There's been much unpleasant talk about machine and rings. Courteney Doane, God rest his soul, was a little raw at times. Bad appointments work both ways. Why don't you advertise this administration as absolutely untrammelled?"

The state chairman looked at me admiringly.

"Just the line," he said. "You tell the Governor not to worry and I'll give a tale of woe to the newspaper boys. That will go big.... But what shall I do for Cape?"

"The streams are now pure," I hinted.

"You would be a wonder," Baker said, "if only you would take things seriously."

Thus the days passed by. At first I expected momentarily that some great oversight or ridiculous disaster would come to light or take place because of my negligence or Mr. Griffin's naïveté, but nothing dreadful happened and, if one could judge by the press, the administration was more than usually popular and successful. I was sure that, whatever else went wrong, the responsible administrative positions would fall to capable men and that many such worthy ones as George Meadows would have a chance to improve

things to their heart's content. Fred Atwell had scrupulously withdrawn his insurance bill, not wishing to embarrass Mr. Griffin in case it should come to him for signature. I thought there was little chance that it would, for it had never received more than a dozen votes. Still, I knew that Fred enjoyed the gesture and let him make the best of it. I admire people who can make gestures without shame.

"Just promise me one thing," Fred asked. "After dad's term is over, I want you to persuade him to come out in favor of the bill. He will have even more influence then."

My future was so badly mortgaged already that another promise mattered little. I would readily have supported a bill to do away with insurance entirely, for it smells of the kind of foresight which makes men most absurd and has always been used to enslave them. But I cared little for my own ideas, such as they were. They had never been of much use to me.

As I say, the secret of governing Massachusetts was as remote from me as it had been on the morning following the death of Courteney Doane, but the state went merrily along. The street cars, now under control of only two large companies, kept their schedules when the weather was fair; crowds of men and women poured into the city each morning and dispersed each night; the banks remained open, and so did the Salvation Army headquarters. The only change was in my own point of view. Instead of idling away the morning and drinking mildly in the afternoons, I was busy at my desk from nine o'clock until far into the evening and more than once had been obliged to take Mr. Perkins' place as the Governor's spokesman when I had been unable to stall off a speaking engagement. We continued the same system which had been used at the

convention. Mr. Perkins spoke and the Governor delivered a short supplementary paragraph which gained him **all** the glory. It really was not bad for Mr. Perkins, since he was deprived so much of my company. He loved the use of rhetoric and the power of spoken language. He would have spoken just as well in behalf of a fallen Ming dynasty, but what of that? His hearers always had a marvelous evening. It was no such pleasure for me to face an audience, but I could not leave Mr. Griffin alone at the mercy of a crowd. Our whole fiction about his eloquence would have tumbled and I was becoming more anxious each day that the year should be one on which he might look back with pride and no regrets. That would make his leisure years at Eastford the more enjoyable and would give me inner justification for failing to turn my hand again the rest of my natural days.

I suspected that Mr. Perkins was not as jolly during the days and hours he passed alone in the office. His eyesight was failing, just enough to bother him if he read too much, and at Bixby's or the Bellevue bar slight acquaintances were sure to bother him with well-meaning conversation if he were alone. Because his name had been connected so much with that of the Governor, dozens of important cases were offered him but he was in no mood to work and was especially careful not to capitalize Mr. Griffin's friendship. Just how would Mr. Perkins spend his last years, I wondered? I was getting worried about everybody.

Only an exceptional performance could lure Mr. Perkins to the theater. He loved the drama too well. But I suggested that Mary should hear the best concerts and he often accompanied her on evenings when I had work to do. As I recalled the burlesque shows, they seemed quite stale and tame to me. I should not have laughed aloud if all

the people on the Common had suddenly begun using slapsticks on one another nor if the speaker of the House had turned handsprings while a debate was in progress. I saw no actual handsprings in the House, but one day while a senator was speaking, a messenger handed him a telegram and after glancing at it the senator cleared his throat, said "On the other hand" and argued exactly the opposite way. I noticed that some of his colleagues grinned. Mr. Rush, who was standing by my side in the little corridor which connects the Senate chamber with the executive offices, said:

"That message must be from Tortoise and Patch."

He was astonished to learn that I had never heard of that firm. I remembered later, however, that Fred had mentioned that name as a reason why the president of the Senate could not be lieutenant governor. I made a note of the bill and asked Mr. Perkins to look it over when it came to Mr. Griffin for signature. As I had surmised, there was a joker in it which would have given trust companies a virtual license to steal. Mr. Perkins framed our first veto message and all the storms which fish and game or five-cent milk had aroused were nothing compared with the gumshoe campaign which opened upon us from the most unexpected directions. The press did not come to Mr. Griffin's rescue this time, partly because the question was too technical to explain to newspaper readers and partly, I was told by Jim Brown, because the National Bank had ordered the business office to shut down upon the proposition.

"The Senate's in a panic," Brown told me. "They can't pass the bill over the Governor's head without the House and the speaker hates the president like poison. Why don't

you call up a few of the city solicitors? They'll help you out, in return for your non-interference plank."

"I wish you were the Governor's secretary," I said.

"No, thanks," he replied. "You're doing first rate."

I LEARNED later that Mr. Perkins had been instrumental in frustrating the most radical method used by Tortoise and Patch to bring pressure to bear upon the Governor. Having a number of Mr. Griffin's mortgages in charge, it was he who was visited first by a vice president of the bank with which Mr. Griffin had done business for years. The banker was courteous and regretful but he had known for some time that the organ business was waning and his board, for the sake of the depositors, had decided that they could no longer carry the mortgages.

"That's fine," Mr. Perkins had said. "At half past eleven to-morrow morning, the Governor, accompanied by two or three members of his staff, will publicly withdraw his account. I hope for your sake that none of the reporters follow him, because the wrong sort of publicity might hurt your institution."

That was the end of that. But Mr. Griffin had been annoyed by so many callers whose errand proved to have some connection with banking legislation that I began to shut down on them and flatly refused one or two admission to the inner office. One of the men I refused was, I was told by Mr. Rush, who had some misgivings, the part owner of an influential Boston paper. The result was not long in showing itself.

"Is Elijah Griffin Governor of Massachusetts, or has the guidance of state affairs fallen into the hands of a well-known lobbyist for the fish trust and his young partner who guards the executive gate like a modern Cerberus, with one pair of ears cocked wistfully toward the press?" was the interrogatory sentence which opened the leading editorial of the paper Mr. Rush had mentioned. From that time on, the tone of the news in that paper was openly hostile and half-page automobile advertisements from Congressman Moore's concern began to appear with astonishing regularity.

The legislature was trying for an early prorogation. In fact, since the opening day the principal subject of conversation in the lobby had to do with the probable date on which the general court could finish its business and the members go home. We had a few more clashes with the Senate, but never in the open. At Mr. Baker's fervent insistence, I agreed that if the Governor had any further objection to the bills he received, he would give the Senate or the House a chance to request that the measures be sent back to them for amendment. The clerks of either branch could think of parliamentary ways in which to undo or accomplish anything at all. A few more weeks went on, and each Sunday morning the church bells rang out as ever, children were born, with the usual large proportion legitimate, bankruptcies were not too common and grass began to show through the snow on Boston Common. I was beginning to believe, once more, that we should get through that grotesque year, somehow, and eventually might even forget about it.

I was surprised one afternoon, early in April, to hear Mr. Rush whisper pleasantly in my ear:

"The young lady is outside. Shall I ask her to come in?"

He reappeared instantly with Beatrice. and gracefully withdrew.

"I want to see you, Frank," she said, much agitated, as soon as we were alone. "Take me to dinner somewhere. When can you leave this place?"

I had not seen Beatrice often since the night of the Governor's reception, and when I had chanced to meet her at Eastford she had been exceptionally careful not to distract my attention from Mary. I had wondered from time to time how she spent the evenings on which I was poring over page after page of new laws or addressing patriotic and religious organizations. It was a subject I avoided thinking about, for in moments of depression my mind had a tendency to revert to the mood of despair which had been dispelled by the appalling announcement of Courteney Doane's sudden death. I knew she visited quite dutifully her invalid mother, for whom she had no great affection, but her character was such that she could perform distasteful duties without letting them disturb her youthful poise. In the past I had frequently been astonished by her precocious balance and for that reason was more impressed by her rebellious nervousness as she sat waiting for me to dispatch a small heap of documents.

The weather was mild, so we walked the short distance to Young's. The waiters there, having seen me so often with Mr. Perkins, received us with deference and found us a table near one of the stained glass windows, just far enough from the fireplace which glowed at one end of the room. In ordering I followed so closely the lessons I had learned from Mr. Perkins that it was almost as if I were impersonating him. Beatrice did not seem to notice, and although she did not eat very heartily, as the meal progressed and the dining room filled up with oddly assorted

guests, she became more calm and finally almost comfortable, in her feline way. Surely she had never been more striking in appearance, and not a man passed who did not turn surreptitiously to look at her again. This visibly annoyed her.

"I hate men," she said. "Not you, Frank, but all the others. They waddle around like bears on their hind legs, and sniff."

I waited for her to elucidate, for no trivial matter, I was sure, had brought her so unexpectedly to me. She twisted and untwisted her gloves, stirred aimlessly the dregs of her coffee, and sipped from the rim of my liqueur glass.

"Did you ever get drunk?" she inquired. "What does it feel like?"

Our dinner was finished and I was too selfish to suggest a theater, for I had never had an evening alone with her and I hated the thought of being wedged in between strangers and distracted by forced voices on the stage. She wanted to tell me something, but it was difficult for her to begin.

"Let's walk," she said, and we started toward the Public Gardens, but the chill had not been driven by spring from the air and I could feel her shivering as I held her gloved hand and let the soft weight of her forearm rest upon my sleeve.

"Where do you live?" she asked. Each statement or question was somewhat peremptory, conveying to me her displeasure with something outside of myself and by such familiarity exempting me from it. I told her about my furnished room on Pinckney street.

"Can't we go there?" she demanded. "I can't talk when I'm cold and I can't bear to have any more people stare at me. Do I look crazy, Frank?"

"You know that you are very beautiful," I said.

"Oh, don't," she said, sharply. "Let's go to your room."

Now I did not know how to explain to the daughter of my good friend that in spite of my errant desires, no female except the rather battered one who served me my morning coffee, had ever been entertained in my quarters. I was not sure how the landlady, if she saw us enter, would take it. Still, I led her on in the direction of Pinckney street and we passed through the lower hallway and mounted the stairs without seeing a single person or being seen. Once inside, I tried to put Beatrice at ease. The only comfortable chair was a large Morris chair and when she began to cry, I took her hat off gently and drew her down upon my knee. For a moment, until she could control her sobbing, she threw herself upon me and clung to my shoulder, then she sat up and with an effort started telling me about her father.

Beatrice adored her father. All her life she had watched the shipping news eagerly to see when the *Silas Cogswell* was due and before she was able to go to the dock alone had insisted that her governess take her to meet him. His brief sojourns on shore had been holiday periods for her. On pleasant days he would take her to the Zoo and tell her about the animals or ride for hours upon the swan boats in the Public Gardens, pretending they were at sea. When winter storms kept them at home, he would tell stories to her and promise that some day she should make a voyage with him. That was before she had smelled a shipload of raw mahogany. She did not tell me all that, but I fitted her incoherent words into what I already knew about their relationship and waited anxiously for her to disclose what had happened to mar it.

For the past several months, Captain Tewksbury had

made no voyages at all, for reasons which I knew all too well and the decline of the organ business, coincident with the ascendancy of steam freighters, had made it doubtful whether he would put to sea again in the old *Silas Cogswell*. For him, the world was going to pot and he was often in a condition by supper time so that he avoided seeing his daughter for her own sake. One evening Beatrice had been restless and had started out alone to walk along Commonwealth avenue. Upon a bench a man and woman were embracing rather unrestrainedly and as she approached she had recognized the voice of a governess whom she had detested and who had been discharged by order of her mother for a reason which was hidden from her. She was nearly opposite the bench when she heard from the man in the shadow the voice of her father. I saw that the experience had shaken her badly. She never before had thought of her father in that rôle where the best of men appear to least advantage, and was bitterly hurt to find the reason for his neglect of her. Her jealousy was of the violent type which applies only to persons one does not like.

I was relieved it was nothing worse. I explained as best I could the difficulties her father must have undergone because of her mother's infirmity, the irregularity of his life at sea, and the need which all vigorous men feel for the natural expression of their exuberance. I called to her attention the fact that women age so much more quickly than men and the effect which her own lavish affection must have had in stirring his desire for companionship. As I warmed to the subject, urged on by my solicitude for her peace of mind and my genuine admiration for the Captain, I did credit to the tutorship of such persuasive men as Mr. Perkins and my soft-voiced messenger, Mr. Rush, citing instances from history and from literature in which men of

her father's age had shown the same craving for rejuvenation by means of younger women. It was unfortunate, I said, that the local customs, considered so quaint by the rest of the world, had forced her father to do his love-making on a public bench and I assured Beatrice that in France or Germany, even in London or Shanghai, such conduct as had shocked her so much would not attract passing notice.

As my words led me into divers paths, I could feel her relaxing in my arms and I enjoyed with her the flood of relief which forgiveness and returning sympathy for her idol afforded her. She was anxious to hear all I had to say, to have nothing concealed about the ways of the world. And the rapt attention she paid me impelled me to go on and on in praise of the qualities her father possessed and the excusability of all his frailties. I do not hesitate to say that I made out a remarkable case for him, turning the very incident which had threatened to estrange his daughter into a cause for loyalty and unrestrained love.

"You have so much of his nature yourself," I said, "that you ought to understand him."

Impulsively she rose to her feet.

"I understand many things much better now, Frank," she said. "And so I'm going to stay here with you to-night." And she began to detach the hooks from the eyes in the back of her waist.

I WILL not say, in defense of my fears or theories, that the springtime which ensued does not drift out from my memory, blurring the outlines of what is before me and holding me suspended wherever I am. Neither will I say that I would have had it otherwise, at any sacrifice. It has passed. Let be.

I spent mornings, afternoons and evenings in the executive offices, handling myriads of details with a dispatch which baffled even Mr. Rush. I snatched the initiative from the forceful men who came in with an ax to grind and sent them on their way with a pleasant tingling sensation and nothing tangible whatever. Between letters and telephone calls and urgent conferences, I built empires of the queer stuff I had read in second-hand books and the still stranger material which was real and close at hand. Into dreams of accomplishment and efficiency I let my fancy fare freely, knowing with a faintness around my heart that such things could not be. Not that Beatrice had ambitious notions or made the slightest demand upon me. When we met at Eastford, not even Mary, the most sensitive of all of us, could detect a change in our relations, for Beatrice and I both had an instinct to keep doors closed between the various chambers of our lives. On Tuesday and Friday evenings she would come to Pinckney street, eager and

with undivided emphasis upon the moment, and we would relish parting for another few days and were almost disgruntled if chance threw us together betweentimes.

Could anything have been more fatuous than my feeling of triumph? Can I bear to admit that I walked the streets with my shoulders thrown back, brushing the passersby with kindly contempt and patting myself upon my ego's shoulder, saying such phrases as, "Well, well, it pays to wait..." or "Nothing like this has ever happened before." I would gaze upon rows and rows of blank windowpanes or impervious brick walls, believing that if I could tear off the front and leave the interior exposed the scenes I should witness would invariably be beneath our standard. The men and the women of Boston did their best to increase my vanity, and so did Beatrice, with an almost vibrant content. She liked to leave her nightgown so that I might place it beside me in her absence, and the woman who brought my coffee caught sight of it one day and grew fairly radiant with appreciation. She chuckled to herself as she pattered around the room, looking beatifically at me and shaking her head.

"I didn't think you had it in you," she cackled, frankly. "Don't worry. I'll never say a word.... A fine young lady...strong...and lots of gumption." She had seen us enter the very first time. Perhaps she had looked through the keyhole or listened at the door. I hope so, poor soul, for she showed no signs that she had ever been much of a beauty and I liked her for her fine appreciation of Beatrice.

The State House, meanwhile, was seething with political excitement, for the legislature was about to prorogue, the Republican convention was at hand and no one was sure who was going to be the next Governor. I cared not at all about that, but I was determined that it should not be

Elijah Griffin. I had told Mr. Baker positively that Mr. Griffin would not be a candidate. His health would not permit, his business affairs must have his attention, he had consented to run for lieutenant governor against his best judgment and his inclination. His public duty would be at an end on the last day of the next December and no amount of pleading for the state or the party or even for humanity itself would change his decision. Mr. Baker listened in dismay, for the feud between the speaker of the House and the president of the Senate had grown more intense and no other candidate was in sight.

"The man I am most afraid of is Moore," Mr. Baker admitted. "He'd split the party wide open if it meant anything for him. He's been smelling around, and advertising in all the papers. He'd never dare to bolt if Mr. Griffin could only stay where he is just one more year. In a three-cornered fight a Democrat might win." Mr. Baker spoke of that possibility as if it were like an invasion by the Japanese.

"Please, for God's sake, don't let the Governor make a statement that he will not run. Keep them all guessing a while, so that I can have time to get things in hand," he said, so when the newspaper men became so insistent for word about Mr. Griffin's plans that I could not put them off any longer, I composed the following statement, and sent it out, with Baker's approval:

"The people, through their chosen representatives, select their own candidates for Governor and it little behoooves a man who holds that office to spend the people's time in seeking selfish ends. If we are to have political conventions, their business should be transacted after the meeting has been called to order and not beforehand, in the corridors of public buildings. Far too small a portion of the year is left free from political disturbances and if the present

tendency is carried further, the future will be little else than a series of campaigns, perhaps even overlapping one another. Let us devote ourselves to the tasks immediately before us, bearing in mind that government is not the sole occupation of a free people."

Jim Brown, when he read it, shook his head.

"It's easy enough to say nothing in a couple of columns," he said. "The Supreme Court can do that. But you can seem to boil it down to fifteen lines."

"It's harder to play Scarlatti than Rubinstein," I agreed.

"I hope the Governor will do something splendid for you, if he does pull out," he said.

"The only thing I would accept at the hands of the people of Massachusetts," I said, "is a first-class steamship passage abroad."

"Do you mean it?" he asked. Then, before waiting for me to answer... "I believe you do. Well, you're all too deep for me."

The consensus of opinion, after Mr. Griffin's statement had been considered, was that he did not intend to run and that loosed another flock of influences still more troublesome. With all his popularity, his support would mean success for any candidate and before the week was over the chairman of the House ways and means committee invited me to dinner. He had canvassed the representatives in behalf of the speaker and found that many of them would swing their following to him in case his name was offered. Knowing of our quarrel with the president of the senate and of Tortoise and Patch's hostility, the House leaders rather counted upon the Governor to side with them. I was rather inclined that way myself, so I put it up to Mr. Griffin.

"It wouldn't be right for me to interfere. Say that I will

support my party's choice, as I always have," he suggested.

Al Baker was greatly perturbed. The speaker employed the broad "a" in words such as "raspberries" and habitually appeared in spats.

"They'll never stand for a silk stocking candidate," he said. "And his middle name is Percival. That's sure to leak out."

As the situation got more muddled I felt obliged to keep the shifting details of it from Mr. Griffin, in order not to worry him unnecessarily and with a secret fear that his sense of duty might trap him into a receptive attitude. I knew what he wanted, all right, but I also realized that he was suspicious of desires which seemed too strong in him. His lifelong Congregationalism had been a rather perfunctory observance, but its gloom on earth and peace in heaven idea had crept into his mind unconsciously and rested there side by side with his sensible plans for ease and retirement. For my own part, I knew that I should crack if I had to remain in the State House a single day after December thirty-first.

"He ought to take the nomination or leave it," the speaker's emissary said, disgruntled. "Nobody else can plan a campaign until he says yes or no." I did not dare to reassure him that Mr. Griffin would not run because of my pledge to Baker. The Republican chairman, seeing nothing but chaos if the Governor stepped out, could not give up hopes of persuading him to remain. He had men working in all the church organizations and one of them, less discreet than the rest, visited a prominent Methodist in Bristol county, not stopping to find out that in his church Congressman Moore was the nominal leader of a Bible Class. The Fall River News let out a blast next day that under cover of devotion to the public business, Governor

Griffin was combing the state for votes in the coming convention. "Let him deny it if he can!" was the concluding challenge.

"I never have asked a man either to vote for me or to solicit votes," the Governor said, indignantly, not knowing what Baker had done, and the Fall River News next day printed an affidavit from the Methodist, disclosing the full text of the remarks of Baker's scout. This time the chairman of the ways and means committee charged me to my face with bad faith and I told him to go to hell. A Democratic paper led off like this:

REPUBLICANS SPLIT WIDE OPEN

Governor Straddles Fence As Henchmen
Play Hide and Seek — Parsons
Throws Hat in Ring

Parsons was an able and wealthy industrialist, one of the few extremely influential men who had always been Massachusetts Democrats. The Mayor of Boston, who wielded a tremendous block of city votes, came out jubilantly for him, although they had been enemies for years and a clever cartoon depicted Mr. Griffin astride a picket fence, in the guise of a farmer, shaking his fist at Parsons and O'Rourke who were burying a hatchet in his cornfield. What puzzled me most was the fact that every word or gesture any of us let slip seeped through the whole political fluid of the state, like blueing dropped in water, changing the complexion of everything. My hasty rebuke to the chairman of the House ways and means committee, although delivered behind closed doors and to a man I was sure would not air our differences, even my phrase

about a ticket to Europe, reached the ears of the president of the senate and through him Congressman Moore. When Mr. Rush announced that the latter had called to see me, I made ready to receive him coldly but he greeted me with extended hand and his static smile momentarily broadened for the occasion. He could not have been more friendly if Bob Quincy had still been Fish and Game Commissioner.

"Busy days we're living in, aren't they?" the Congressman began, and when I agreed a little too pointedly he got right down to business.

"I hear you're looking for a consulate," he said.

I was too taken aback to deny it at once. I did not connect for a minute my wish for a ticket abroad with this discussion about a diplomatic post.

"Nothing is farther from my mind," I said. "I shall stay here as long as Mr. Griffin wants me, then rest forever. I'm going to retire at the age of thirty-two."

Congressman Moore lost a bit of his affability, believing that I was stalling him.

"Come now," he said, "we all of us want something. I couldn't promise to get you Paris, but how would Lisbon do? Could you accept it by the end of the year?"

That was the catch. If I had actually known my plans I should have been trapped into answering and disclosing Mr. Griffin's intentions. As it was I could only assure my caller that he had been misinformed about my ambitions. He concluded that I was cunning when actually I was being most straightforward, and he was visibly annoyed. I was not approached again by him directly but in numerous ways was sounded out as to what would satisfy me. Both Mr. Griffin and I lost patience and served notice on Baker that we should announce the Governor's withdrawal from the field. By that time Baker had reached the same con-

clusion. The party was in such a tangle that he could only let the various candidates fight it out, pledging all of them to support the successful candidate. This was done at a small dinner party after which the political reporters were called in to receive the news. Mr. Griffin told them he would not run, but that he would support whomever the convention named. The speaker, the president and Congressman Moore declared their candidacy but in the presence of the newspapermen and of Al Baker shook hands solemnly, promised a clean campaign, and agreed that whichever of them was successful should have the unstinted assistance of the two who were defeated. Then, just as it began to look as if party solidarity might be preserved, Mr. Griffin made his gravest political blunder.

In the State House at Boston, as in all buildings which house legislative or judicial assemblies, there is a small and motley army of men and women who have no visible means of support, who never have been known to do any one the slightest harm, and whose interest in all public questions is fanatic. I had seen enough of them, in the corridors and committee rooms, to know the pet idea of each one, although they all were in favor of nearly everything except capital punishment. Legislators avoided them, messengers and clerks were short with them, none of their measures ever passed. And still they haunted the galleries, collared unwary representatives and senators, circulated petitions, formed leagues and kept up a sort of activity which resulted in nothing but wearing out their clothes. The youngest had his heart set upon old age pensions, another had invented a bicycle railway which would save half the rails in the country, a third, and the only one whom I wished the worst of luck, dreamed of nothing else

but closing the saloons. Among them were several suffragists.

On a Wednesday morning in May, when for reasons I need not repeat I was feeling kindly toward all mankind, Mrs. Barnabus, a small, shabby woman with a grotesque old-fashioned hat that slanted like a wrecked vessel because of a crick in her neck, came timidly into the corridor of the executive offices. Mr. Rush was otherwise occupied, so I asked her what I could do for her.

"Do you suppose," she asked pleadingly, "our good Governor would see me for just one moment?"

Her interest in life was securing for women the right to vote and she had harder sledding than most of the other reformers, for no Republican had shown the slightest favor to her cause. With my lungs full of the fragrance of buds from the Common I could not have refused a beggar my trousers.

"He's very busy, madam," I said, but at the sight of her disappointment I dissolved and added, "but if you will be brief perhaps he will spare you a minute or two."

I announced her to Mr. Griffin and left them alone and Mrs. Barnabus, true to her promise, came forth promptly, fairly squealing with joy. She was too breathless to explain the cause of her excitement to me but down toward the House lobby I saw her stop to talk with three or four men who were standing there, then hurry on up the little flight of stairs which led to the gallery. It was nearly time for the daily conference with reporters and several other affairs distracted my attention so that when the newspaper men stood around the Governor's desk I was entirely unprepared for what happened. They asked the routine questions and finally the Globe man said nonchalantly:

"I hear you want to give the vote to women, Governor."

The others listened eagerly but Mr. Griffin did not notice their tense attitude. To him, in spite of his many sad lessons, a simple question was worthy of a candid reply.

"I don't see why they shouldn't have it if they want it," the Governor answered.

I nearly bit my pencil in two, but I was too far away to step on his foot, and suddenly I remembered that Mr. Perkins had told me Mary Tarr was one of the original Massachusetts suffragists. Doubtless Mr. Griffin's attitude was a tribute to her. But the Republican state committee, afraid that all Catholic women would vote Democratic in a body and that Protestants, poorly organized, would not take the trouble to go to the polls, had carefully stifled any reference to the subject for years. I did not care how much Mr. Griffin outraged the conservatives but I knew another Gethsemane was in store for Al Baker and I was really afraid he would lose his mind. He called me on the phone that evening and all but wept. Several newspapers, the editors of which liked to be known as progressive, played up the Governor's stand and by approving it stirred the conservatives like hornets.

Ordinarily the Democratic convention was the stormy one while the Republican meeting was cut and dried. But that year all the interest was in the fight for the Republican nomination. When I went with Mr. Griffin to Tremont Temple, this time provided with a seat upon the stage, I could hardly believe that only two years had passed since I had heard him accept so diffidently the nomination for lieutenant governor. The same faces were gathered in the hall, the same hats and coats were in the check room, but this time the tension was so great that my eardrums roared like seashells and when we entered the band struck up "Hail to the Chief" and played it three or four times while

the delegates cheered the Governor. The speaker of the House was sitting quietly in the second row, showing his nervousness only by pressing his teeth together and swelling the muscles of his jaws. The president of the Senate was in the lobby until the last moment. As Congressman Moore came down the aisle, the entire delegation from Bristol county shouted and waved its arms and I noticed among them the heavy man with the deep bass voice and the wooden rattle.

Mr. Griffin called the convention to order and said:

"Fellow Republicans, this is the last day that we shall have dissension among us. Let every man follow the dictates of his conscience and the assembly accept the verdict of the majority. The first business, as you know, is the nomination of a candidate for Governor." Bang! His gavel hit the desk so sharply and so soon that no one was prepared. The three men who were to place the names of the candidates in nomination hesitated, then rose to their feet at exactly the same moment. Mr. Griffin turned to me uncertainly.

"Alphabetically," Mr. Perkins whispered. The Governor caught on. He was improving rapidly, now that the end was in sight.

"Gentlemen," he said, "since you are equally agile and will all have a chance to speak, I shall recognize you in alphabetical order, according to your residence. Mr. Sanford of Boston."

There was a scattered applause from the representatives and their allies. Mr. Sanford, in a speech just a shade too scholarly, offered the name of the speaker of the House. He was followed by a man from Greenfield who was spokesman for the president of the Senate. His reception was still less enthusiastic.

"Mr. Townsend of New Bedford," Mr. Griffin said, and the Moore enthusiasts began cheering before a word was spoken.

"The gentlemen already named," Mr. Townsend began, "have shown their merits as leaders of the respective branches of the General Court. Unfortunately, they are both so deserving and have so many stalwart friends among the men who have served under them that it is hard to choose between them. To offer either one as a candidate involves too much risk of ill feeling. The man I am about to name has proven his worth in the national arena and will have behind him that great body of independent voters without which no candidate can hope to be successful." He went on to pay tribute to the courage of Congressman Moore, to his influence in the business world and his steadfast Christianity. Again and again he was interrupted by the rattle of the deep-voiced man and a volley of cheers. Mr. Griffin was just about to close the nominations when the leader of the Middlesex delegation sprang to his feet. Al Baker looked bewildered and the newspaper men began whispering.

"Mr. Fairfield of Newburyport," the Governor said, after a pause.

"The delegates from Middlesex county, appreciative of the excellence of the candidates already named, are agreed that just one man is capable this year of leading his party to victory. This man is not a politician but a statesman, and his claim to the governorship is such that proverbially it is nine points in the law. He possesses it already, gentlemen, and it would be breaking a splendid Republican precedent if we were not to leave him for another term in a position he has filled with such distinction.

"I need not tell you, Mr. Chairman, who that man is

but for parliamentary reasons I shall pronounce his name. Elijah Wetherle Griffin."

I have never witnessed such an uproar between four walls. The delegates who did not cheer were muttering and shouting at one another. Congressman Moore shook his fist in the air. A score of men tried to second the nomination. Al Baker rushed from the stage, colliding with newspaper men on the way to the telephones. Mr. Griffin's gavel might as well have been made of flannel and somehow the bandmaster mistook a signal and played "Hail to the Chief." I sat shivering in my chair, trying to collect my wits, when a boy handed me a telegram. Scarcely knowing what I was doing, I tore it open and read:

EIGHT POUND BOY AM DYING TO COME HOME

SUE

"I move we take a recess of thirty minutes," shrieked a delegate from Bristol county.

"Recess! Recess!" yelled those who were pledged to the speaker of the House.

Before the motion was approved, men rose all over the floor, overturning chairs and pushing one another. A fist fight broke out in the gallery.

"I'll get you for this," said Congressman Moore to me, across the footlights. I was too dazed to reply. At the end of a half hour there was no prospect of order, but at length the delegates quieted down and resumed their seats. The roll was called and the votes recorded, each man on the first ballot being obliged to stand by his pledge. Moore led with 226, the speaker had 212, the president, 154, and Mr. Griffin 42, all from Middlesex. There was no substantial change during the morning and neither of the two leading

candidates would consent to a recess for lunch. The air became vile.

Mr. Griffin was white with embarrassment. He did not know how to withdraw his name and Baker, who had also been insulted by the Congressman, was working furiously for a compromise. On the fourteenth ballot, the president's following dwindled, a few of his votes going to Moore. At this the speaker, infuriated by the apparent conspiracy against him, in a sarcastic speech where his Harvard enunciation was most cutting and effective, urged his supporters to vote for Griffin and they did. The result was Moore 265, Griffin 254 and the president 123. At this, the delegates from western Massachusetts, at heart most enthusiastic for the Governor, considered that their duty to the president had been discharged and started a landslide for Griffin. It was over in a moment and the final ballot was Griffin 438 and Moore 194. The Middlesex men started marching up and down the aisle, spectators threw away their hats and handkerchiefs and Mr. Griffin, completely bewildered, let a motion for a recess go through. Before we were fairly out of the hall the newspapers were being rushed through the streets with banner headlines.

"I don't understand it, Asa," Mr. Griffin repeated, staring miserably at his plate. He could not swallow food.

NOTHING could destroy the charm of a summer at Eastford and that one was mellowed somewhat by the absence of ill feeling between the Atwells and the Treadwells, for Anne and John had built a pretentious summer estate at Magnolia, where they entertained Mrs. Bartholomew and Mrs. Ebenezer Hoag, had innumerable guests from Salem, Medford and Boston who played croquet upon the lawn, organized charity fêtes with Japanese lanterns, or danced upon the yachts in the harbor. We all visited them once, enjoyed the sights, met scores of people and came home again. I preferred the smell of the sea across miles of marsh grasses, without its maddening slaps under boats and the muffled threat of the surf. And croquet, for a man addicted to chess, was much too strenuous for hot weather. The summer cottage, large enough to house a dozen guests, had been built by Mr. Griffin for Anne at her own request. She had learned that he had paid for Fred's house and believed it was her due. John, who was unusually prosperous, had been annoyed by her demands upon her father but was afraid their life would be unpleasant for a while if he crossed her will. In fact, he could not understand her constant worry about money and her quarrels with the hired girls about half pounds of sugar and butter.

While the Treadwell house remained with blinds closed

and cellar windows boarded, the Atwell lot was all color and fragrance. Fred, whose venture into politics had brought results so far beyond his expectation, had lost interest in phonographs, Oriental rugs, paintings and the work of the Republican town committee. His warm enthusiasm was now directed upon children and flowers. He did not plant a few mere shrubs and flower beds in geometrical spots upon the lawn, as was the suburban custom, but had the entire lot dug up, fertilized and spaded, and with the aid of a gardener from England covered every foot of available space with blossoms. With each slight change in the angle of the sun, fresh hues would well up from his profuse botanical display, crocuses were followed by tulips, the fragrance of which was eclipsed by mignonette. Scarlet geraniums bordered the house and the walks, sweat peas spiraled on the screens of the porch, beds of cinnamon pinks, petunias, phlox and rhododendrons poured their perfume into one weird chord with the pæans of drunken birds and insects. And up and down the paths walked Fred, in his shirtsleeves, with the youngest baby in his arms while Mattie watched from the window of the upstairs living room, nearly choking with hay fever.

I had prevailed upon Mr. Griffin to take a month's vacation in order to set a proper example to employers, not realizing that this meant that a permanent coterie of reporters would be stationed at Eastford. If Mr. Griffin went driving, or stepped upon a potato bug, into the papers went the occurrence and every one in Massachusetts knew that at half past two the Governor took his nap. Mary was almost equally in the news, since she was with her father nearly all the day. There was no need for reporters to exaggerate her beauty, for she looked her best in summer clothes, with the freckles she no longer tried to avoid and

a healthy tan which brought out the blue in her eyes. On a dull day, from a journalistic point of view, the Globe man got to talking with the station agent at a moment when Mary and I drove by in the light buggy, behind the pacer.

"Isn't that fellow lucky to be her young man?" the station agent remarked.

"Why, that's her father's secretary," the reporter replied.

"I don't know nothing about that," said the station agent, "but I notice he used to hang around here years before the Governor was in politics. If he ain't her beau, then who is? I see who gets on and off the trains."

The conference hour was at noon, when the Governor received the reporters on the porch and served them punch with fresh crushed raspberries and Jamaica rum.

"Is it true that your daughter Mary is engaged?" the Globe man asked.

Mr. Griffin came as near to losing his temper as he ever did, but at Eastford he felt more like a host than a Governor and so controlled his indignation. Mary's scarlet face at the far end of the veranda and my own confusion conspired to make the denial unconvincing. The Globe man kept his word, and printed not a line about us, and later was sorry he had been so scrupulous, for the Transcript social columns two days afterward started the rumor and nobody in the commonwealth doubted its authenticity. My apprehension really did an injustice to Beatrice, who appeared as usual on Friday, regardless of the stifling city heat, showing a little strain around her eyes but not in the least resentful.

"Beatrice," I said, "you know..."

"Don't talk about it," she said quickly. "Don't think about the future at all." I must say she played up splendidly

but the perfection of our relationship was slightly clouded, it seemed to me, and I could not act naturally at all with Mary. I began to suspect that she knew about Beatrice and me. Only on certain summer nights, when all the others had gone to bed, and we sat upon straw cushions on the grass, inhaling the soft breezes from Fred's flowers and hearing the whispering of the trees, at such times we moved close together, naturally, and my shoulder tingled when her hair blew across my face. Having to be so circumspect in the daylight, we often sat on Mondays and Thursdays until two or three o'clock in the morning, stealing to bed in our stocking feet so as not to awaken the household.

The State House seemed remote indeed, but nothing I could do would raise Mr. Griffin's spirits. The convention had adjourned in an atmosphere of mutual hatred and distrust. The speaker had thrown his organization into the pool against Moore, believing the president had planned all along to withdraw in favor of the Congressman. He was in no mood, however, to keep his men solidly in line for Mr. Griffin, suspecting treachery also on my part. I could as easily have made a department store salesgirl believe I was not the betrothed of Mary and as such the happiest man in the world as I could have convinced the politicians that I had not had a hand in staging the Middlesex county demonstration. I almost felt at times I was mistaken about my own actions. Al Baker was most comforting. He assured Mr. Griffin that no active campaign would be necessary. In fact, Albert Parsons, the Democratic candidate, had said before the convention that he was running principally because Mr. Griffin, whom he admired, was going to leave the field to a pack of wolves. Baker was having large posters printed with liberal quotations from Parsons' unstinted

praise. It was true that only Mr. Griffin could hold the party together and expect to get the usual Republican majority. Mr. Griffin knew that, and dumbly accepted it as a cross. His hopes and ideas, so slow to take shape and direction, were hard for him to relinquish. He brooded about them long after his mind was made up to supersede them. Actually he had never rid himself of the notion that as a Governor he should know the laws he had sworn to uphold and often when I opened his door unexpectedly I would find him struggling through a chapter of the Revised Laws or the Acts and Resolves. I believe he was taking them in order and had progressed in six months as far as 1839. I told him repeatedly that the attorney general was elected especially for the purpose of advising him but he did not trust the attorney general, and neither, in truth, did I.

On one point he was firm. He would do no campaigning. If the people wanted him to be Governor they were free to vote for him, but he would make no speeches, contribute to no funds, wave no Grand Army flags and lay no more cornerstones. At eight o'clock each morning he was at his desk, so I was told, and at four-fifty he started for the North Station and said good-by to his bodyguard there. The legislative halls were empty, heads of departments were in the mountains or at the shore. Gradually I got used to the idea of remaining in harness another term and I think Mr. Griffin became partially reconciled a few weeks later. Joe found his disappointment at the delay harder to bear. He could no longer pretend to be interested in organs or in anything else. His eyes grew dull, he lost weight again, becoming as stringy as his sister Anne, and one evening when I was present all his resentment flared out

and he told his father point-blank that he was going to quit the factory.

Mr. Griffin was tired and stunned. As Joe related bitterly how sales had fallen off, how men laughed at him when he mentioned his business, how pianos and phonographs thumped and rasped at him from every window and doorway and the way he had to hide in a corner of the warehouse to escape the sound of Captain Tewksbury's snoring every day after lunch, Mr. Griffin listened as if the full force of the words did not reach his understanding. He had not been inside the factory for months and had thought Joe was continuing his rapid progress and managing the business well in his absence. I think even his renomination for Governor did not have the depressing effect upon him that Joe's pardonable outburst produced. Still he was fair and restrained when he found his voice and said, simply:

"You know best what you want to do, my boy. I am sorry if I have held you back."

But as Mary and I sat on the lawn that night, we heard him clear his throat and move about in his room, and after we had moved farther away from the house, to where the moonlight made patterns through the grape arbor, I had to explain to her about street railways and steel and the fact that Bach years ago had done about all there was to be done about organ music. I suspect it was the first time the flux and change of everything had been brought into her mind so inescapably and I could not bear the sadness which that concept placed upon her.

"I wish we had lived at the time of Bach," she said, and winked to hold back her tears. "I wish we could have sat under the window of his house when he played the Well-Tempered Clavichord.

"I don't want to die..." she burst out, clinging to me.

"I want my mother, Frank." And she fell down sobbing on the grass, face downward, clenching her fists and kicking her feet spasmodically. I knew what she wanted, all right, but what could I do?

That night we did not go to bed at all. We walked for miles on the paths of the marsh, watching the sun creep up behind the incoming tide and pretending later that we had risen early.

“**T**HAT two-faced bastard has double-crossed us,” Al Baker said, rushing into my office just after five o’clock one afternoon late in August. He was in a state where blasphemy was all that stood between his mind and madness. The fact that I did not tear my hair almost made him cry. He saw that I did not grasp the enormity of what had happened.

“Moore has filed papers as an independent,” he said, and began murmuring curses and expletives as if he were telling off beads in a shipwreck.

Up to that moment I had not known that independent candidacies could be launched in that fashion, but it seemed that a certain number of signatures, which could be bought like long sticks of Christmas candy, entitled a man to a place upon the ballot. Still, I remembered Moore’s having shaken my hand at the little dinner party and with that stiff smile having joined the triangular pact for Republican unity after the convention. I am sure he believed that Mr. Griffin had played false with him, and I do not say this in his extenuation. He had the kind of mentality which bounds others by its own limitations and believes human motives do not vary. Every one knew this but his constituents, and to them he was a God-fearing family man with the courage to speak his mind.

I did not want to drive poor Baker into catalepsy, but I was anxious for him to enlighten me further. I realized before he spoke that the Republican vote would be split and that perhaps Mr. Griffin would lose, but it seemed likely that Parsons would win and he was an excellent man. Such a prospect cheered me greatly and I thought it would help Mr. Griffin to bear his disappointment about Joe and the organs. Baker, when he was calm, explained what sort of debacle a Democratic administration would mean for him. Every public employee who was not protected by the civil service laws would be turned out of his job, contracts would go to the relatives of ward heelers, Tortoise and Patch would be put to the expense and trouble of financing both parties in order to be on the inside whichever way the balance turned. The judgeships would be filled by ambulance chasers, the legislature would be unable to function, Boston's city administration, without a Republican check, would come up in the night and scrape the gilt from the State House dome. O'Rourke would trap the sparrows on the Common and sell them for canary birds. Baker became eloquent and imaginative, but it was only his despair which moved me and not what threatened the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Just what it was, that commonwealth, I still was unable to decide. Its leaders, in their homes, were decent enough men, but upon a platform they became comical. The citizens, while the state was swayed by economic and political storms, soaked their feet to relieve their colds, and wet pencils on their tongues. Some men prospered, others went mad, but what did the state have to do with that? On the map, the commonwealth looked rather like a worn-out beer opener.

The charge that I had had a large share in its governorship, while made with hostile intent, had elements

of truth. I had taken as much as I could of the responsibility because, not caring at all whether the commonwealth was ceded to the Albanians for a weasel ranch, I had wished to spare Mr. Griffin the pain of solving problems he could not dismiss so lightly. Certain reputable commentators had praised our administration, so I concluded that the ship of state, so bravely launched by our forefathers, was going on of its own momentum. Any one at all who held the wheel without tampering with the mechanism could act as skipper. Why not a Democrat? I was gayer than I had been since the convention and did my best to hide it for Baker's sake. Mr. Griffin, however, was shocked. It was as hard for him to believe a man was dishonest as it was for Moore to reverse the process. He recalled distinctly the mutual promises made and until he saw headlines all around him he believed there had been some mistake. He would be sorry to see his party defeated. He had always felt that way. But for a man with whom he had been associated publicly and who had addressed the senior Bible class of the Congregational Church at his invitation deliberately to go back on his word was grave and unnatural.

"Boys," he said to the newspaper men, "did you not understand Mr. Moore to say that he would support the convention's choice?"

"He thought he was going to win, Governor. That was simple enough," Jim Brown said. "What are you going to do about it?"

"I shall ask the speaker and the president to join me in recalling his promise to his mind," Mr. Griffin said.

"The president will knife you, too," said Brown. "Don't give him any chance. The speaker went to a British school where they never cheat at cricket, so he's a fairly good bet."

Al Baker did not let me get out of his sight that evening. We simply must make an active campaign, he said. He had at his fingertips the election figures for many years previous and made it clear to me that the Republican vote, normally, was slightly more than two thirds of the total number of ballots cast. If Moore should get half of it, he might be elected. I pointed out Mr. Griffin's aversion to electioneering, but nothing I could say impressed the state chairman. He knew that the Governor's nomination had been accidental, that he would make a poor appearance before a crowd, and yet he was convinced there was no other alternative. I made no promises that first night but after reading the papers next morning I was thoroughly aroused and would have challenged the Congressman to a duel if such practice had been permissible.

He charged Mr. Griffin with inexperience and senility, with having conspired with the machine against the people's choice. He lampooned Mr. Perkins, said that the state departments had been filled with harebrained cranks from outside and cited figures to show that unemployment had been steadily on the increase since Mr. Griffin had promised to do away with it. His principal attack was directed against Mr. Griffin's beard which he said had been grown to mask his duplicity. Also he reminded the voters that the Governor had never been elected but had strode into office in a dead man's shoes, and said he had put his prospective son-in-law on the payroll in order to swell the income of my law office. The Governor was silent, he declared, because he had nothing to say.

I was so angry that I did not wait to consult Mr. Griffin but issued a counter statement in his behalf in which I accused the Congressman of being an opportunist and a liar, quoted the Congressional Record to show he had

called the Republican senior senator from Massachusetts a whelp, declared that he had tried to intimidate us into continuing his incompetent friends in offices for which they had no qualifications and said the Republican party was well rid of him. The Democrats were so happy that they staged a torchlight parade.

I was astonished next day to see my father enter the office, his face beaming with pride and enthusiasm. I had seen little of him since coming to the State House and did not realize that he had been following the printed version of my career with approval and delight.

"I didn't think you had it in you," he said. He loved a fight. Before he left town he gave a large check to Baker for the campaign fund and handed me a blank check signed.

I gazed at it somewhat ruefully after he had gone. It was the first time I had had prospects of money and under no circumstances could it have been of so little use to me for I was caught in a whirl of affairs from which I saw no hope of release for fifteen months to come. He had made large profits, I learned, from his street railway stocks, since the New Haven had bought up several small companies at fantastic prices.

Mr. Perkins was hard to stir from his habitual lethargy but I think he had found the time heavy upon his hands and Moore's attack upon Mr. Griffin brought him into action. He joined Baker's insistence upon a campaign, suggested that we use our office for headquarters and asked Jim Brown to take charge of our publicity. Before Mr. Griffin had had time to object, Mr. Perkins had planned a tour of western Massachusetts and declared it would do us all good to get out in the air. Baker decided to let Moore have Bristol county, except for such votes as the loyal rep-

representative could swing, and it was no use campaigning in Middlesex for the whole county was solidly behind Mr. Griffin. Essex county was nearly as favorable. A few days after the office on Park street had been transformed into campaigning headquarters, to the complete disgust of Miss Zinc, Lottie Bacon called and seeing a pile of letters to be addressed and folded got down to work and spent the whole day there. From that time on, she was the most faithful volunteer worker. Lottie enjoyed the atmosphere of politics more than that of the burlesque show. When only our friends were nearby she would puff away at her cigars, read extracts aloud from the papers, and apply such epithets to Congressman Moore as would have won us thousands of votes if they had been mild enough to print. I could understand her enthusiasm, for it was her one chance to forget for a time she was a woman, but Jim Brown, the most cynical of all the newspaper men, exceeded the zeal of the most exalted State House habitués. I had believed that complete disillusionment was the prime requisite for a newspaperman and was led to see my error. There was not one of them who could not, on occasion, throw himself with childish abandon into any story or cause. Mr. Griffin, in Jim Brown's eyes, became a saint and a martyr. His least utterances had Scriptural significance. If a draft blew on his head it was cause for consternation.

Now, as I look back, I can scarcely credit the memory of those busy days and nights, when my own sense of values was so inflated and Mr. Perkins, Epicurean, forgot to eat his meals. The only person to keep his head was Mr. Griffin and I am sure that if he had read half the words which were credited to him he would have stopped the whole proceedings and announced publicly his real

conviction that the people had better vote for Parsons, regardless of party lines.

I was obliged to spend the days in the State House but after five o'clock I rushed to Park street to perform the most trivial tasks, licking envelopes, putting ribbons on typewriters, reading proof on speeches and posters and looking up expletives in volumes of the classics which had lain unopened all too long. Not a man who called upon us had any fear for our success. Representatives assured us there was nothing to it. City and town officials sent in encouraging reports. In spite of the increase of automobile advertising, the press gave us an even break, for Mr. Griffin was Governor and what went out from his headquarters was news. I did not stop to reflect that the visitors at other headquarters were equally sanguine. After Moore's initial blast of generalities, little was heard from him for a while and Baker began to think we should concentrate our attack upon Parsons for fear he might make inroads into Lynn and Brockton where shoe manufacturing was the principal industry and the Democratic candidate was well known and respected. Neither Jim Brown nor I could put our hearts into that. For my part, I could not have distinguished the Democratic from the Republican platform and the only way high tariff had ever affected me was to keep the price of imported English books at a prohibitive figure.

The time arrived when the Governor must start making speeches, but we worked the same system which had hitherto proven so effective. Mr. Perkins would sway the crowd as if the faces before him were printed upon a tablecloth he was shaking from a window, having been tipped off by some local Republican as he entered the building what subject would be likely to be well received. To the Italians

in the North end he spoke of Christopher Columbus, to the French in Lowell he eulogized Lafayette. The Portuguese were more difficult, until he remembered that Mr. Griffin's ancestors had been sea-faring men and had sailed the seven seas when the flag of Portugal was seen streaming from sturdy mastheads in every port of the known world. In an industrial district he would point out that Mr. Griffin's workmen called him Elijah and had not missed a day in twenty years, however hard the times had been. To a local Christian Endeavor Society he would quote the Thanksgiving Proclamation and describe the pew in which Mr. Griffin had sat each Sunday morning of his life. At just the right moment, Mr. Perkins would pass the audience over to the Governor in a state which would have impelled them to cheer if Mr. Griffin had read them a laundry list. Simultaneously, Jim Brown would be sending to each paper in the state a résumé of the kind of speech which would be of general interest throughout the state, which he and I wrote in collaboration, he contributing what might be called the words and I the music, for he wrote very awkwardly.

"Why, Frank," Mr. Griffin said, a hundred times, "I never said anything like that."

"We can't expect you to think of everything," I replied. If he had been riding on a runaway engine he would not have felt more helpless to control his destiny.

The tour of western Massachusetts occupied the last two weeks in October, culminating in huge rallies in Springfield and Holyoke and another in Worcester. The president of the Senate, a Springfield man, was taken sick at just the time when he would have had to show his colors. Jim Brown tried to get revenge on him by sending hourly telegrams to his bedside, asking for bulletins on his health.

Lottie, who had worked herself to shreds in the office, begged to be allowed to go along and I consented with the proviso that she put on her mother's most womanly clothes and refrain from swearing or smoking except in her own room with the door locked. The farmers of western Massachusetts were the most outspoken foes of women's suffrage and Mr. Perkins, Al Baker and Jim Brown had coached Mr. Griffin carefully how to act when some heckler asked him about votes for women, as was sure to happen. The geldings were shipped to Pittsfield, with a buggy and the carryall, in a private car which Melzer did not leave for a moment. The rest of us followed in a passenger train. When we started out the next morning, I felt as if I had become part of an animated cartoon. Mr. Griffin and a man named Ben, who was acting as our impresario, traveled in the buggy. Mr. Perkins, with an especially stiff stand-up collar and his battered felt hat, sat beside Melzer in the driver's seat. Lottie and I brought up the rear, but it was not the Lottie I had known before. She wore black gloves and a hat with celluloid grapes and looked disapprovingly at any man who spat tobacco juice upon a hotel stove or the floor of an opera house. Two other hired rigs augmented the procession, one for newspaper men and the other for local candidates and extra speakers. In the first little town through which we passed, a tall stubborn man bawled out:

"How about votes for women?"

"That is not an issue in this campaign," Mr. Griffin said, not missing a word. "What I want is to have all the men do their duty and go to the polls. This town has always been loyally Republican, and in the coming election I seek not a personal triumph but a vindication of those principles which have stood the test since the days of Abraham

Lincoln and will be placed in jeopardy if each and every one of you do not cast the ballot for which your forebears strove so hard."

"It doesn't sound natural, Frank," he had objected at rehearsals, but the frenzy of approval with which his suffrage detour was greeted soon convinced him further that he did not understand public speaking at all.

In the haze of Indian summer, with the foliage red and yellow and the air tinged with woodsmoke from the bonfires, we traversed the Berkshire Hills. Our grotesque procession wound its way through the ravines, up the slopes and across the divides. Towns shimmered below, in the cups of the valleys, lonely farmhouses and flocks of sheep could be seen on the fringe of the timber land. The streams were cool and clear, and Mr. Griffin would stop the geldings to let them dip their muzzles in the water. We would take it easy on the stretches which were sparsely populated, then go trotting into town as the bugler stood up in one of the coaches and sounded a military call which would bring the population to the square to hear us. Mr. Perkins was in his glory, for the fresh air whetted his appetite and his indoor habits made the autumn countryside especially poignant for him. Daniel Webster or Henry Clay never spoke with more fervor nor elicited a more complete response. If we had worn war paint and feathers and had had a few cases of snake oil we could have made more money in a month than the income of our law office would be in a year and we should have enjoyed it even better. I was so relieved to be out of the city, where poor Jim Brown was grinding out the speeches we had prepared in advance and listening eagerly each evening for my long distance telephone call to assure him our itinerary was being followed and that no member of the party had

dropped dead, that I did not notice Mr. Griffin was not eating much. In some of the cities and towns we had excellent food but there were others where cooking had never been known. What I failed to take into account was the fact that the Governor was utterly unable to overcome his nervousness and that all day long, until the last rally was over, the nerves of his stomach were tense. He did not sleep well on strange beds and was mildly oppressed by the discrepancies between the spoken words and the columns of print which contained such generous estimates of the size of crowds that if they had been added for a week, the figure would have exceeded the entire population of western Massachusetts.

Mr. Perkins, the newspaper men, the local candidates, and I, in addition to the exuberance we felt because of the weather and the scenery, kept ourselves and one another in a comfortable state of intoxication. In the evenings, to avoid too long a session upon the rigid hotel beds, we played poker with the curtains down, so as not to lose the church vote, and I learned that in Moore's retinue, which was touring Essex county while we were harvesting the western fields, two secretaries made it the custom to lose large amounts to the newspaper men every night. I did not stoop to that, but I did contrive to pay for whatever liquor Mr. Perkins did not contribute, and every one, including the prospective voters, and excluding only Mr. Griffin and the geldings, had a marvelous time.

Al Baker joined us in Springfield, where in spite of the indisposition of the president of the Senate, we got out a record crowd and brought them to the highest pitch of enthusiasm. I had wanted to revise the suffrage answer for that occasion, afraid that in a city where phonographs and bathtubs were so plentiful the old stuff about Lincoln and

the forefathers might not go down. I cannot tell you how badly I was mistaken. Ben, whose last name I have forgotten, but who acted as if he had lived his whole life for the sake of ministering to Mr. Griffin just two weeks and who could recall the names of all the babies in the carriages on the edges of the crowd, set me right on that point. I was astonished to see that he was completely thrilled himself. I found such men in busy cities and outlying villages, men who looked forward to a political campaign as a sportsman dreams of the hunting season. They were pathetically anxious to make themselves useful. I was forced to admit that electioneering was not so bad,—if we could have been working for Parsons.

The crowd was not always predisposed in our favor. In one of the wards of Holyoke, as Mr. Perkins got up to speak, there issued from the back rows a derisive chorus of sounds which according to Rabelais' Father John, can best be produced with new wine and chestnuts. He let out the full force of his voice above the turmoil.

"There are Democrats in the hall," he roared. "I can always recognize their arguments because they sound so much alike."

The mood of the crowd veered toward him instantly and he was quick to take full advantage of it.

"The Democratic candidate is an honorable man," he said. "He is successful in business, loyal in his friendships, his word is as good as gold." (He waited for the cheering to subside, then dropped his voice almost to a whisper.)

"There is just one difficulty, gentlemen. He cannot be elected. You all know that in Massachusetts your party is in the minority, not at all a dishonorable rôle, for healthy criticism is the yeast of good administration. If you vote for Albert Parsons, you vote for one of nature's noblemen, but

you help thereby the cause of one who has been a Judas in his own party and would prove a traitor to the state if by accident he were given a chance. Think this over, gentlemen, before you cast your ballot. Your candidate has spoken well of Elijah Griffin. He esteems him and the high standard of citizenship which he represents. Your Governor, too, is a successful manufacturer who has never once overlooked the interests of his employees. And what is more important, sirs, is that he is a gentleman." The roar of applause made it unnecessary to go on although we had intended to say a word or two about shorter hours in paper mills.

Due to my inexperience, I was too much carried away by our local successes. Al Baker was not so optimistic, for two factors were worrying him. The first had to do with O'Rourke. Persistent rumors were current in Boston that the Mayor had quarreled with Mr. Parsons and that Moore had promised him that if he were elected he would let him choose his own police commissioner. The most disturbing item was Moore's continued mildness. He made no more vitriolic attacks, poked no more fun at Mr. Griffin's beard. His speeches had to do with state and local issues, with perfunctory denunciations of the machine.

"He worries me," Baker said. "He's not making noise enough. Won't you ask the Governor if he won't let me stage one big rally in Boston, in Mechanics Hall, the Saturday night before election? That will put a whirlwind finish to the campaign."

I was apprehensive, for in such a case Mr. Perkins could not be used as picador. However, I consented to use my influence with Mr. Griffin and he was in such a state that he acquiesced helplessly. After our conference, Mr. Griffin

reluctantly consulted a local doctor, for his stomach had been troubling him constantly.

"Too many cigars," the doctor said. "Stop smoking for a while."

TWO days before the rally at Mechanics Hall, Moore advertised that he was going to appear there and ask the Governor a few questions about his administration. We replied, in Mr. Griffin's behalf, that our candidate asked nothing better than an opportunity to reply publicly to any questions his opponents cared to ask. The hall is in a large brick building on Huntington avenue, two hundred yards beyond the Public Library in Copley Square. I had never been in it before, but remembered having stopped on the sidewalk to look through the broad windows into the basement where an engineering school was installed. The structure covered a tremendous area but was comparatively low and looked from the outside like a deserted factory lighted up for the watchman inside.

Promptly at eight o'clock, when a crowd planted there by Al Baker was waiting on the sidewalk to start the cheering, the Governor drove smartly down the avenue and brought up the geldings at the stone hitching post. Seats had been reserved for all of us, although there was a capacity crowd and men were standing in the aisles and around the sides of the hall. Not all of them were Republicans, for Republicans are scarce in Boston, but the fight between the Governor and Moore was the only spectacular feature of an otherwise dull campaign and every one who

liked politics was there. Baker had stationed two men with their pockets full of two-dollar bills on a side-street nearby and after the rally was over, our cohorts were to collect what was due them, and were to be identified by the large man with the deep bass voice and the wooden rattle.

"I don't expect any rough stuff," Baker said, "but you never can tell. Moore has a hundred thugs scattered from one end of the hall to the other."

The preparations were not at all reassuring to me and I could not help but think of what Mr. Griffin would have said if he had known what was going on. The audience reminded me of the patrons of the Howard, on a holiday night, except that here and there were intelligent faces and that those who felt a draft kept on their hats. Smoke rose to the beams of the ceiling and dimmed the lights, pouring through open ventilators. On the stage were four chairs, two on each side, and a plain wooden table on which stood a pitcher and a glass of water. Moore was late in arriving, probably on purpose, but Baker held Mr. Griffin in the wings until just a moment before the Congressman appeared, then sent him to his seat to get the first of the applause. Moore's entry prolonged the demonstration.

The rival candidates offered an odd contrast upon the barren platform, for Mr. Griffin was still troubled with dyspepsia and was so tired that he sat with his shoulders slightly hunched together, looking at the toes of his boots and wishing the ordeal were over. Moore was dressed in the nattiest style, with black coat and gray striped trousers, neatly pressed, and his smooth shaven face, bearing its artificial smile which looked quite genuine ten or twelve rows back, was fresh from the hands of a barber. The Congressman did represent, after all, another generation, a new race of crafty men who were seizing upon the mechanical

improvements of the age and discarding, perhaps too hastily, the standard of conduct their predecessors had left unchanged in its essentials. No doubt there were others of them who were not unscrupulous but would prefer to follow a progressive man for the sake of progress itself. I knew that element was strong among the voters, and I personally detested it, but to speak to an election crowd in Mechanics Hall about eternal values would have been like staging a game of drop the handkerchief in a Roman arena.

The preliminary speeches were brief and impatiently received, merely stating the purposes of the meeting and what each of the principals stood for. My hands were trembling and my throat was dry. If only Mr. Perkins had been on the stage, I should have looked forward to the exchange with glee but I pathetically wanted the men assembled there to appreciate Mr. Griffin as I did, for once to be swayed by the worth of an unpretentious man and to rebuke the one who had put the campaign upon a plane so low that Mr. Griffin could not descend to its level. Moore offered at once to let the Governor speak first, as if he were extending him an advantage and a courtesy.

"Not on your tintype," yelled Al Baker abruptly. "Let's have your questions, if you have the nerve to ask them."

Men moved their hands and shoulders and their eyes began to glitter. That was the kind of talk they had come to hear.

Moore became smoother than ever.

"Very well," he said, "I will say what I have to say."

"The Governor," he said, raising his voice to its shrillest pitch and facing the audience, "has said a great deal about honesty since he took office. We have heard the solid New England virtues extolled to the skies in each issue of the newspapers. We have also seen Massachusetts citizens

turned out of the jobs they had filled for years and have seen them replaced by theorists with their heads in the clouds and their hands in the public treasury...."

"Baaaaah..." roared the man with the deep bass voice and some of his followers joined him, grunting and cat-calling like predatory beasts while the Moore supporters cheered and yelled,

"Let him talk! Give him a chance!"

"We have heard Governor Griffin endorse votes for women, then calmly subscribe to the Republican platform which contains an anti-suffrage plank." I was dismayed, for I had not read the platform. Already I began to feel guilty and incompetent.

"We have been treated to an administration of mismanagement and inaction. Mr. Griffin, inexperienced himself, has been surrounded by advisers in whose hands he has been like a child. That's the trouble, gentlemen, with statesmen who know nothing of politics. When it comes time to go home at night, they find that some one has stolen their rubbers and their overcoats."

Al Baker was holding his nose.

"This stuff is pretty tame," Jim Brown said.

At a signal from the Congressman, an attendant brought a handful of documents from the wings and laid them upon the table. Moore calmly took a drink of water, and when he resumed employed the old trick of dropping his voice to induce immobility and silence.

"But we are here to-night, gentlemen, to discuss honesty. Since the Governor has raised the question, let us examine the brand of honesty to which he has treated you..."

"Get down to brass tacks," shouted Mr. Perkins, beside me.

"All right, I will," replied Moore. "Elijah Griffin is a

member of the firm of Griffin and Tewksbury, 128 Hanover street....Are you not, Governor? (He turned to Mr. Griffin who nodded.)

"Now, gentlemen, I want to read you a little resolve passed by the General Court of Massachusetts when Elijah Griffin, of Griffin and Tewksbury, was lieutenant governor.

"Resolved that the Sergeant-at-Arms, with the approval of the Governor and Council, is hereby authorized to decorate the headquarters of the Grand Army of the Republic in the State House in a style corresponding to that of the reading rooms of the Senate and the House of Representatives."

"The item in the general appropriation bill to cover this decoration was no less than \$50,000.

"That sounds commendable, doesn't it? The Grand Army is a splendid institution. The Governor, himself, is a member, although I am given to understand that he never smelled powder...."

Another murmur swept the hall.

"Question! Question!" yelled Mr. Perkins.

"On January 8," the Congressman continued, "just three days after Mr. Griffin's inauguration, the Governor's Council, over which the Governor habitually presides but which on this occasion had to do without him, for he was tactfully absent, directed the Sergeant-at-Arms to purchase materials and hire workmen to decorate the Grand Army headquarters. That still sounds innocent, doesn't it?"

"He's too long-winded," Jim Brown whispered. "They're getting tired." Evidently Moore had the same idea, for he raised his voice, contorted his face and extended his arms.

"The joker is this, voters of Massachusetts! Men who pay the bills! The Senate and House reading rooms are paneled with mahogany, the principal commodity sold

by Griffin and Tewksbury, and by a queer coincidence, gentlemen, the Sergeant-at-Arms made straight for the Governor's business office at 128 Hanover street and handed over the fifty thousand..."

A roar shook the foundations of the hall. Men surged to their feet, turned to shout at one another, whistled, booed and cheered, while Congressman Moore, simulating a white-hot rage, shook his fist in Mr. Griffin's face and screamed "Graft! graft! graft!" Mr. Perkins was on his feet, struggling to get to the aisle. Baker had made a pass at Moore and was squirming in the arms of an Irish policeman. I must have been shouting myself, for when a man in front of me said "Shut up" I let go at him with both fists and for minutes afterwards was aware of nothing but pressure and dust and smarting areas on my head and shoulders. I was fighting no one in particular and I think the others were not, except for the men we had hired who knew their opponents by sight and were adept at rioting. Chairs were broken. The janitor turned out the lights. The din became so hideous that the riot squad arrived from Station 16, turned the lights on again, and cleared the hall. Ambulances and patrols went clanging down Huntington avenue and reporters raced for the telephones, found them too slow, and hurried to their offices. I was bleeding a little and my clothes were torn but I realized I must find Jim Brown and Al Baker. Then I remembered the Governor. What had become of him? He had protested bewilderedly, so taken aback that even before the hall was in complete confusion he had given an impression of guilt. I knew better, but I was sure the audience had thought he had been caught red-handed. I ran toward our headquarters, seeing that the Governor's carriage had disappeared, and wondered as I ran what had happened to Mr.

Perkins. My mind worked jerkily, as if it had been broken up into ice floes. There was work to be done, I was sure, and was hoping that Brown would be there to direct me. He arrived at Park street three minutes after I got there, having been taken to Station 16 where he had shown his reporter's badge and frightened the desk sergeant half to death.

Mr. Perkins was at the Relief Hospital, where one man who had been caught in the doorway was on the point of death. From there he went to the Police Headquarters to try to get a warrant against Moore for murder in the second degree but the police captain did not dare to take a stand. Jim Brown's mind got going quicker than Baker's or mine but he knew better than either of us the hopelessness of the situation from a publicity standpoint. The Sunday papers were on their way to distant cities and towns, with scare headlines. We could get a counter statement in the Boston editions, but none of us could draft anything which did not sound completely insipid. Mr. Griffin was in bed in the Bellevue Hotel, almost in a state of collapse. The doctor insisted that we leave him undisturbed after he had simply said what we all knew, that he had no knowledge whatever of the transaction Moore had mentioned. Our statement was simply those words.

I sat in our office with Jim Brown and Mr. Perkins that night, saying nothing and looking aimlessly from the window. On the day I had first seen Congressman Moore I had felt an aversion to him. After the rally I knew I should attack him if I met him on the street but the act would be a mere matter of form. Too strong a load had been placed upon my nerves which conducted anger. The fuse had been blown out. In the reaction I was suffering, I recalled all my former distaste for exertion and for public

affairs. I could not understand how Mr. Perkins and I had been drawn into such a vortex. I think he felt the same way. We had made fools of ourselves and exhausted Mr. Griffin, spoiled his plans for peace, damaged his reputation. I wanted to stand upon a stormy mountain and brandish my fists at the sky but I knew I could achieve no adequate gesture. I wanted to hire Moore's whole crew of bouncers, at two dollars a piece, to kick me in the behind. I could have thrown myself into the rollers of the presses which were grinding out the testimonials of our destruction. And all I could do was to listen to Al Baker, sick and wan, repeating to himself:

"He can't get away with it. He can't get away..."

"Where is Mr. Griffin's partner?" asked Brown.

I told them he was on the way to Havana to stock up on cigars.

The telephone rang. It was the desk sergeant at Station 16.

"There's a bruiser in here who wants to talk with Mr. Baker," he said. Baker did not catch the man's name but understood he was expected to get him out. I volunteered to go to the station for him and ten minutes later I was led to a cell in which I saw, leaning like a gorilla against a set of bars, the man with the hoarse bass voice and a nose like a frost-bitten pear.

"What's the idea?" he asked, peevishly. "I got a wife waiting up for me."

ELECTION day was clear and not too cold. That, our workers told me, was a good omen for the Republicans. Democrats, I was given to understand, would vote on a rainy day or even in a hail storm, but the members of the majority party were loath to get wet.

Mr. Griffin, surrounded by photographers, cast the first ballot at Eastford and I do not know to this day whether or not he voted for himself. He had left his bed at the Bellevue on Sunday morning and had spent the day at home, going to the State House on Monday. The incident at Mechanics Hall, once it had passed, left him rather more calm and unworried, for at heart he was a very religious man and I could see by the way he held his head and shoulders as he walked down the corridors of the State House that he expected the voters to vindicate justice. I knew he was counting upon it, as seldom before he had staked his mental poise upon an exterior event. This filled me with foreboding, for I was moving under the handicap of the precedents of history. I had a mystical streak in my nature quite as strong or even stronger than his, but it faced the opposite way. As surely as Mr. Griffin banked upon the triumph of the right, I feared that justice, marvelous and imaginative concept as it was, would get its usual well delivered ax between the eyes. My father, being

an optimist, had telegraphed me that he would pay all expenses of a damage suit against Moore.

The morning dragged interminably. I tried to imitate the conscientious attitude of the Governor and remain at my desk pretending to be occupied and nonchalant, but at eleven o'clock I gave it up and headed for Park street. The first returns had come in from South Wellfleet: Griffin, 36, Moore, 13, and Parsons, 1. Well, what are forty votes in two hundred and fifty thousand, I said to myself, but to Al Baker the figures from that little hamlet on Cape Cod were alarming and significant. It should, according to results in other years, have gone solidly for Griffin.

"The God damn fools are taking stock in what Moore said," he muttered. He invariably referred to the voters in some uncomplimentary fashion, except when he was addressing them.

"When shall we know how things are going?" I asked.

"Not before midnight," he told me, and I wondered how I should hold myself together until that hour. Mr. Perkins had thought of that and, since the saloons were closed, had tucked away a few quarts of bourbon in the closet. Our statement in the morning paper had prophesied a clean sweep for Mr. Griffin. So had the statements of Moore and Parsons predicted an overwhelming victory for Moore and Parsons, respectively.

"It's anybody's fight," said Jim Brown, so nervous he could not sit still. I wished he had said anything but that, for I was dreading not defeat but the prolonged suspense. A horse race, once around the track, is enough to make me shaky for an hour afterwards. The headquarters were almost deserted at that hour of the day, since the men who had trooped in and out were busy at the polling places, working, I did not know just how, for Mr. Griffin. I should

have been happy if they had been among the Bristol county Methodists with blackjacks, as was not an uncommon practice in some of the Boston wards. Just after lunch I tried to take a nap, but my heartbeats, due to whiskey and thoughts about justice, shook the posts of the bed. I read the same paragraph fourteen times from an old Quincy newspaper, stumbling over the same typographical errors each time. Then Lottie arrived and we played three-handed hearts with Mr. Perkins in my little room, this time with the door open, since the church vote never strayed into political headquarters on election day. Essex county voted early, and so did Middlesex, and in the late afternoon editions showed that they had piled up a substantial lead for Griffin. Mary called me on the telephone, and I read her the returns. Western Massachusetts seemed to be holding up pretty well, but still, the small towns which should have been solid were slightly split. It was not Mr. Griffin's supposed wrong-doing which affected the rural voters, I believe, but an appreciation of Moore's cleverness in revealing it. He looked like a smart man, particularly in the pictures displayed on his posters, where that smile had been softened a bit by the artist.

In the evening, we moved to the state committee headquarters in the American House. Mr. Griffin had planned to stay in Boston all night and as the evening came on our office was jammed with cohorts from the field and dozens of men whom I had never seen before. All the papers showed that Griffin was far ahead, but the total votes accounted for were less than one hundred thousand. The Bristol county towns, and those of Norfolk, which we had completely forgotten in our plans of campaign, voted solidly for Moore and thus balanced many of the Middlesex county votes. The Cape had been incensed against the suggestion

of woman's suffrage, an attitude I could little understand since the women seemed to have as little chance of getting the vote as the temperance cranks had of closing the saloons.

In one of the hotel rooms, Al Baker had rigged up an enormous tabulation sheet, spread upon two tables pushed together. It contained the names of all the Massachusetts cities and towns alphabetically by counties and had three sets of columns marked Griffin, Parsons, Moore. The candidate for lieutenant governor was helping tabulate the returns as they came in. I cannot recall his name. The office of the Associated Press on Spring Lane had another such layout, which I visited intermittently with Jim Brown in order to check our figures. Downstairs in one of the dining rooms which had been cleared for the occasion was a blackboard and a platform from which returns received by telephone from various sources were read and chalked upon the board. Cheers sounded faintly through the floor of our room almost momentarily. Springfield, six wards, gave Griffin, 2,457, Parsons, 1,065, and Moore, 801. The first figures from Fall River came in and the crowd hushed down as they were read, for Moore was a resident of that city. Eighteen precincts gave Moore, 3,048, Griffin, 203, and Parsons, 97. Ten Boston precincts came in, Parsons, 4,567, Moore, 134, and Griffin, 14.

"What news from Charlestown and South Boston?" Baker asked. He was neither dampened nor cheered by the scattered reports we had been getting. The Boston polls closed at eight o'clock, two hours later than the voting booths of other cities, and the state chairman believed the result depended in some way upon O'Rourke. Charlestown and South Boston were absolutely in the Mayor's pocket.

I saw Mary looking timidly in the door and went to the hallway to speak to her. She was dressed in blue serge,

which made her look quite slender and severe, as if she had made her own self lovely and felt the force of her creation. The orchestra was playing in the Rathskeller and I slipped away for a dance or two, finding to my surprise that my legs were a bit unsteady. Mary, I think, did not notice it. She never seemed to know when any one had been drinking unless he was utterly tipsy.

"The Governor's daughter..." women whispered as we waltzed past them or brushed them in dancing on the crowded floor. From above we could hear faint cheering and the scuffling of feet when the music stopped.

"We're going to win," she said, happily.

"Don't be too sure, dear," I said. "You mustn't be disappointed if..."

"There's Beatrice," she said. From the day on which Beatrice and I had given full expression to our urge, Mary seemed to have lost her jealousy. To have anything at all settled, even if one misunderstands entirely the nature of it, clarifies a situation. Beatrice and I acted more easily and naturally, so Mary unconsciously did likewise. Her responses were always unconscious, never deliberate, like those of Beatrice. I let my mind relax, forgot the returns for a time, and danced with them in order, marveling in my intoxicated state as to how the feeling, the perfume, the lightest movements of two young creatures could be so complementary. Their costumes, different in cut and in color, were balanced in tone and effect. Their faces each became more expressive and vivid in proximity to the other. The daring and forcefulness of one made the introspective passion of the other more intense. No man in Massachusetts had such rare and stimulating company. After a day of tension, I was treated to a moment of real happiness. My

misgivings disappeared. The future came down like a curtain at just the proper moment in the show.

An outburst of cheering drew us upstairs for a while. Fred was announcing the bulletins. The Middlesex returns were almost complete and the tabulated figures gave Griffin a lead of 25,000 votes over his nearest opponent, which was Parsons. For the first time that day, Al Baker relaxed a little.

"The son of a bitch will never catch up," he said. "I hope the legislature will send a Chinese laundryman to take his place in Congress." Such words could apply only to Moore.

At midnight, with eight wards of Boston complete, and few blanks upon the tabulated columns beside the names of the cities and towns, Mr. Griffin's lead was still 25,000 and the Boston Journal, to be first on the streets, took a chance and came out with big headlines.

REPUBLICANS TRIUMPH; PLURALITY 25,000

ELEVENTH HOUR ATTACK BY MOORE FAILS TO UNDERMINE ORGANIZATION THROUGHOUT STATE

In the midst of the tremendous ovation, which Mr. Griffin was obliged to acknowledge from the platform, and Mr. Perkins swelled by announcing victory at the bar, another deafening chorus of shouts was heard outside the hotel. The doors revolved and, followed by a lusty and disappointed crowd of faithful Democrats, Albert Parsons walked erect through the lobby, made his way to the platform and amid a tumult which shook dishes from the shelves in the kitchen extended his hand to the Governor.

"I congratulate you, sir," Parsons said, "upon a clean-cut and well deserved victory." And he left the hall.

The Republican enthusiasts could no longer remain indoors. They marched through the streets, holding torches, singing songs and shouting to empty buildings or lighted windows. Two bands played conflicting tunes with drunken abandon. The Globe was hawked through the streets and alleys, with newsboys yelling, "Griffin Wins," "Governor Elected," "Read All About It." Fred boarded the owl car at Adams square.

Beatrice at last took Mary home with her to Newbury street, and I rode between them, with a friendly arm around each. Both of them nestled to my shoulder. Mr. Griffin went to the Bellevue where he had engaged a room. The crowd thinned out, returns came in slowly. I joined Mr. Perkins at the bar, where, in spite of the start he had had, he was in full possession of his faculties.

At half past twelve, Al Baker came running in, disheveled. He dragged us upstairs, looked hurriedly about him, and spoke in an undertone.

"My God," he said. "I'm not so sure about this yet. Look at this from Charlestown." Jim Brown appeared, his face quite gray. He had just come from the A.P. office. Four precincts in O'Rourke's ward gave Moore 3,006 and Parsons 423. There were twenty-four Boston precincts more to come, and all of them controlled by O'Rourke. The man with the deep bass voice edged in.

"O'Rourke's handed Moore his wards on a platter," he growled. "He tipped the gang off to vote late."

I still was obtuse and Mr. Perkins explained to me that O'Rourke, remembering no doubt the snow-shoveling incident, had held off his Democratic voters until he believed Parsons could not be elected, then thrown them all to

Moore in order to choose his police commissioner. That appointment, it seemed, was ordinarily made by Republicans over the heads of the Boston voters,— what was known as a check.

Jim Brown was more alarmed about Bristol county, for while we had included some figures from Fall River and New Bedford in our tabulation, the bulk of the textile vote had not come in. Four New Bedford precincts gave Moore, 1,468, and Griffin, 23. Our lead was cut down to 16,000.

"Where's the Governor?" some one asked.

"Asleep," said Baker. "And don't for God's sake wake him up." His tone nearly sobered me. Lottie was adding furiously, finding small mistakes in the lieutenant governor's arithmetic. I wondered what would become of her when it was over and tried to think of some job as social worker which we could give her, if she would promise not to let the poor see her smoking cigars. Strangely enough, she was violently opposed to votes for women. She thought their place was in the home.

Slowly my spirits sank. I watched the dwindling plurality as I followed the motions of the clock, which then said half past three. Only a dozen men remained to wait for the final figures. Four o'clock extras carried new headlines.

GRIFFIN WINS BY BARE 7,000

MOORE MAKES SPECTACULAR FINISH

NEARLY UPSETTING G. O. P.

APPLE-CART

My vitality was at its lowest ebb. I was so tired that I did not care who won and was disgusted with myself for not caring. Figures dribbled in by telephone. The lead was 2,025, then 1,000. At that point Al Baker gave up. With his

eyes cast downward to the floor, he put his hand on Jim Brown's shoulder and the latter broke down and cried.

"I'll kill the bastard," he sobbed. "I'll get him..." And he fumbled for his hat.

"Keep your shirt on, Jim," said Lottie. "Here's another batch." She listened a moment at the telephone, then said sincerely, "*h**!" The lead was 125, with two wards of New Bedford to be heard from. At six o'clock, as I was dozing in the lobby, a bellboy handed me another extra. I saw that another day had tinted the roofs and cobblestones.

MOORE ELECTED BY 258 VOTES

"By Jesus, we're licked," said Mr. Perkins, and turned away.

PART THREE



BY the time I was obliged to stand up for Charley and Sue at their second wedding, in that instance in the Eastford Congregational Church, I had grown accustomed to the idea that each person around me was dealing with a different set of facts. I had regained a part of my composure and had lost track forever of public affairs. Yet the merciful deception of Mr. Griffin troubled me.

Just two months after Mr. Griffin had completed his term as Governor, I received a telegram from Sue in Denver, saying that the baby had died. I am sure the child had perished from his mother's nostalgia. I wired the girl money with which to come home and enacted a rather pitiful farce with Mr. Griffin. How unsuspecting a really honest man can be was illustrated by Mr. Griffin's lack of suspicion, for while Sue had taken the western train as robust as only a stalwart young girl can be when at just the proper time she has commenced her natural function, she stepped to the South Station platform a wan and furtive young woman who might have been any age at all. Her eyes had dark hollows under them, her complexion was yellow, and her sturdy figure had depreciated through undernourishment, for she could not eat away from home. Charley, shamefaced and miserable, although completely loyal to her, met her without a word and we all rode to-

gether in the Saugus branch train with cinders and sadness around us. Melzer was glad to see her and sorry about the baby, but he could say very little about it and the townspeople were so shocked at Sue's appearance that they were almost afraid of catching tuberculosis. Without any prompting on my part, Mr. Griffin had seen that Charley would marry no one else and, in fact, had suggested to me that the will should be changed. Instead of his giving Charley the old house and its furnishings, he built a new house on the high side of the pasture land, bordering on Salem Road, a good half mile from the group of three which clustered at the head of the lane. It was not that he despised Sue but he sensed the necessity of protecting her from Anne's open scorn.

The church was crowded for the wedding, but that time there were no carriages from out of town and no need for reserving seats. Mary played Lohengrin and the Mendelssohn march as well as ever before and Mr. Best's young successor performed the ceremony. There were no reporters, luckily, for in political circles and the public press Mr. Griffin was already quite forgotten. Fred and Mattie, with three of their children, attended and gave a hearty wedding breakfast afterward. Anne took a trip to Niagara Falls. She had spoken her mind to Joe about the pasture land, for while Eastford had been so well advertised in the newspapers, the price of land had gone up threefold and was rising higher. House lots had been sold on Lynn street and around the square and the population had considerably increased. It was unfair, Anne said, to give away land to Charley that was worth six times what she had received but she did not go so far as to upbraid her father about it. Not one of them had presumed to do that on any occasion. Yet the undercurrent of family discord became known

throughout the town, somehow, and nearly every one sided with Charley against Anne, whose entry into society had made her unpopular.

If any one had suggested a wedding journey to Sue, she would have burst into tears. I think never again did she venture farther than the village square and she could not remember the name of a single town she had passed through after leaving Boston. She became pregnant once more, again arousing Anne's distaste, and by drinking plenty of buttermilk and cream, got back the weight she had left at Denver and more. Very likely that terrible space of time and the memory of her guilty baby passed slowly from her mind, for Charley or Melzer were not apt to mention it and surely not Mr. Perkins or I. She milked the cows and weeded the garden, hung out clothes upon the line, and cooked for her father and her husband, eating with them in silence and hurrying to bed. If she noticed that Anne did not like her, she said nothing about it, and I think she was a little afraid of Fred, who winked and whispered broad jokes to her.

It was thanks to Mr. Perkins that Mr. Griffin was able to weather his disgrace. His defeat had not completely shaken his faith in the right, but seemed to him like an unaccountable mistake. Mr. Perkins had given up his room at the club and taken a spare room at Eastford, riding in and out each day with his friend, forcing him to meet his neighbors on the usual terms, the hardest thing for Mr. Griffin to do in the beginning, making each meal and the quiet evening hour enjoyable. He was unable to impart his learning or his philosophy to Mr. Griffin, but he made his great kindness do the work of both. I was with them a great deal of the time, but in such emergencies I am worse than useless. A nervous or a troubled friend makes

me self-conscious and awkward. I have never confronted a bereaved acquaintance without dropping my eyes and thinking of death. For me to say, "Cheer up," sounds so false to myself that it cannot ring true to others.

Refraining from smoking had done Mr. Griffin's stomach so much good that he was able to smoke again. The organ business had made no such come-back. Upon returning to his neglected factory, Mr. Griffin had found the building intact, the same familiar workmen, the old smell of wood and intermittent sounds from the loft. Only there were no customers, and none came. Captain Tewksbury, upon his return from Havana, had flown into such a rage that when he rushed into the executive offices to confront Governor Moore, McGovern had been obliged to prevent him from entering. The truth about the mahogany transaction was easy to unearth, but since a libel suit was pending it was not wise for us to publish it. The only handy supply of the kind of mahogany accidentally specified in the resolve was in the storage yard of Griffin and Tewksbury and after the sergeant-at-arms had tramped all over Boston he had asked the Captain, as a favor, to let him have a couple of car loads, which had been sold the state at cost price, for \$18,000. Captain Tewksbury had loaned the services of two of his wood carvers as well, to save Massachusetts the trouble of sending to Germany for others. Having made no profit on the transaction, and, as only I suspected, having been in the midst of his affair with the governess, he had neglected to mention the matter to Mr. Griffin. The prospect of the libel suit kept both of them from despondency. Mr. Perkins saw to that. It would be several months, perhaps, before the case would come to trial but he promised to give Governor Moore such a cross-examination as neither he nor they nor the Common-

wealth of Massachusetts would ever forget. Once the public mind was cleared of any suspicion of Mr. Griffin's integrity and was set right about the character of the man who had been chosen as chief executive, we would all be glad to have been permitted by defeat to lead rational lives again.

So Mr. Griffin's belief in the triumph of right was given another peg upon which to hang. In the courts of justice, where mob passions may not be swayed and thirteen hard-headed men are given all the evidence and time in which to consider it, he expected to get his deserved vindication. The voters would see their error. He would be satisfied. He was anxious that the facts be known as much for the sake of his neighbors and the men who had voted for him as for himself.

John Treadwell, as Anne grew haughtier and less manageable in matters of money, tried to be amiable and considerate. He took Joe into his business and was extra cordial with Melzer or Sue whenever he chanced to meet them, but his wife was insistent upon having an automobile, since all their friends were discarding horses, so he put up a garage. He also fenced his lot with an elaborate wire fence on posts which were stained to match his house, in order that children might not keep crossing the yard continually and annoying Anne. At odd moments Mr. Griffin discussed the proposed new will with Mr. Perkins and me and since the organ business was a doubtful asset, suggested that perhaps the house and furnishings should go to Joe. He even went so far as to venture the hope that Joe might take a fancy to Beatrice.

"She is such a fine, handsome girl," he said. "I should think any young man would want her."

I nearly swallowed my cigar, and wondered if Mr. Perkins had noticed, so little escaped his eyes, and for my lack

of adequate response to the mention of Beatrice's merits I promised myself to kiss her ears and the nape of her neck five hundred times that very evening. The second time the subject was brought up I could not help but discourage the idea.

"Joe is a natural born bachelor," I said.

"Perhaps you're right," agreed his father, sadly.

I did not tell Beatrice what designs were in motion concerning her fate. It was a topic which brought me considerable pain, for already we had ceased to confine our meetings to Tuesday and Friday nights and we found the shorter spaces of time which intervened almost interminable. The orchestra to which we were dancing had quickened the beat and it would have thrown us out of step to hold back to our former tempo. I no longer tried to keep from losing my head completely, for in honest moments I knew I had lost it and that life without a head bore the same relation to a restrained and sensible existence as cube root does to counting upon one's fingers. With a girl whose nature had boundaries, I might have measured my affection. I felt no such impulse with Beatrice. And if I had been called upon to hand her over to Joe, I should first have plunged my steel paper knife just below her firm left breast, where I had counted her heartbeats in the half darkness of my room on Pinckney street.

What I really wanted to advise Mr. Griffin was to donate his house and the furnishings collected by the Hoags to the town, with a fund to sustain them perpetually as a public museum, so that when street railways and organs and horses had passed away there would be a true reminder of how men had lived who were not in such a hurry. He might dedicate it to the memory of Ellen Hoag and thereby bring her on even posthumous terms with Mary Tarr, whose

name was on the library. But Anne would never stand for such a large gift to the town and for Mary's sake I did not want her mother's memory to lose its distinct advantages. So I did nothing, as usual.

MR. GRIFFIN found it very hard to understand why there should be so much delay in bringing his case to trial. So, in fact, did I. Until that event was over, he must mark time, and could not concentrate his best efforts upon his expiring business or his then incongruous family. His dread of another public appearance and of acrimonious discussion generally made him pale and thoughtful at times but since the question of his integrity had ceased to be a personal matter and was involved with a principle he could not allow himself to shrink from its unpleasant implications. Mr. Perkins, blocked in all his attempts to hasten the opening of the trial, came as near to impatience as he permitted himself to get.

One cannot stand upon a platform shouting that a judge is crooked or even lax, nor can one send such a statement to the newspapers. It is even forbidden to call a judge a doddering old wreck or an ignorant young demagogue. That constitutes treason and strikes at the very foundations of our government. So the winter passed and in late spring I met one of my old acquaintances on Beacon street.

"Let me see," he said, "you were mixed in some kind of a row about the Grand Army, weren't you?" He had forgotten all the details, and so had all the others passing along the busy sidewalks. And if I must again admit a

fundamental weakness, I found it difficult myself to get excited about the matter. What a pity to have a mind like the sea around a wharf, so that the sails of thoughts and resentments are blown in by the wind and gently are wafted out again and over the horizon! I should still have assaulted Governor Moore, if I had met him out of McGovern's watchful jurisdiction, but then it would have been an act of duty, like chopping wood. If I, Mr. Griffin's second best friend, could not keep up my interest in his case, then who could, except himself and Mr. Perkins? Again I bowed to the stamina of the man so poorly equipped for solace in other respects. Mr. Griffin did not flame with anger, nor let his just desires leak out as time ticked off its dotted line. His resentment, logically arrived at, remained at the proper temperature, like Johnston's ale, and as month after month went by, preserved its original qualities. What is a meager grasp of history compared with that? Could not a lover trust such a man to go to war or a widow hand him her savings? Could not the electorate read such a face and bestow its continued confidence? The answer to the last question would be found in the next manual of the General Court, in the negative.

I wished for the case to be over for a purely selfish reason. I was carrying in my pocket a blank check signed by my father, who had plenty of money in the bank. As some people feel prophetic twinges when there is dampness in the air before a storm, I am aware of a change of climate coming on whenever there is money in my pocket. More cowardice, no doubt. I should fight it out along the line.

Mr. Perkins brought into our office one morning, just before the courts were due to take their summer recess, a letter bearing the old familiar seal of the executive offices. How strange it seemed to be on the receiving end, and how

infinitely more blessed! As I read the letter, I realized that I should never assault Governor Moore at all, that if I should encounter him I should stare at him as a prodigy, like a boy before a circus strong man, knowing he was a fake but admiring his audacity for staying in the open.

"Dear Mr. Griffin," the letter began. "Convinced, after thorough investigation, that your actions which I criticized on the evening of November 3 last, were at worst indiscreet and involved no intention of excessive personal profit, I wish to convey my regrets at the construction placed upon my remarks in the public press and to suggest that further dispute between us would be unfortunate and misleading.

"Trusting that you are enjoying your well-earned rest,

"I am,

"Respectfully wours,

"EDWIN T. MOORE."

It was my turn to laugh in a crisis, and Mr. Perkins was obliged to join me. Jim Brown, who had been able to keep up his thirst for revenge, nearly went crazy. He sat in a corner of our office, clenching his hands and letting his mind run wild. One of the mildest plans he suggested was to hire a fairy from Frank Locke's to enter the Governor's Bible class and later denounce him. I pointed out that in all probability Governor Moore had not visited his Bible class for years, except when photographers were present, and that the boy would corrupt half the congregation before he ever caught sight of Moore.

I was more astonished than I had been at the receipt of such a characteristic letter to be visited by Al Baker, his face more troubled than before.

"I'm in a hell of a fix," he said. "If this suit goes on, the

party will be split forty ways and this is a presidential year." The party, at that time, I understood, depended upon the loyalty of its members to Moore, who, at a dinner of peacemakers, had relinquished his title of independent and come back into the Republican fold, cherishing no grudges. He had been photographed extending his hand to Al Baker and smiling his famous smile. I will give Baker credit for being ashamed of himself and for knowing in advance that his mission would have poor results, but he also was conscientious about his duty and had promised to do the best he could to patch things up. I did not berate him, and neither did Mr. Perkins, but we did advise him to keep his hand upon his watch at all Republican get-togethers in the future. He smiled and dropped his pose at last.

"I always have, except with Mr. Griffin," he admitted, "then I was too busy guarding his." We all went out and had six drinks, Baker carefully looking around before he raised his glass to Moore's ultimate confusion. My own levity was false, however. I could not dismiss from my thoughts the impression such a scene would have made on Mr. Griffin. He had really suffered. He was due to suffer a great deal more, I had no doubt. But how can one be completely honest with a scrupulous man or an ultra-faithful woman? The court took its summer recess and election time came on. Of course, there was no party dissension and with a popular Republican presidential candidate to swing him over, Moore got the biggest majority in the history of the commonwealth. I saw that we should be forced to go to trial in the height of his popularity and that in all Suffolk county thirteen jurymen could not be found who were not overawed and impressed by suavity and success and at heart contemptuous of a poor loser with a beard. That was what Mr. Griffin was becoming, in the

public eye, if he could be said to be in the public eye at all. However, I looked forward to Mr. Perkins' cross-examination and his argument. That would repay me in part. Perhaps he would win. He had pulled more difficult cases out of the fire. Meanwhile the bank had refused to carry Mr. Griffin's mortgages and we had had some difficulty in placing them elsewhere.

In order to keep my relationship with Mary within the bounds which seemed necessary for my own peace of mind I had taken up with her the study of the history and theory of music, not the cut and dried stuff which begins instead of ends with Bach, but the odd bits we could gather from the Library and the Athenæum, tales of the bards in the days when musicians had actually ruled in Ireland, Aristoxenus' courageous opposition to the doctrines of Pythagoras, who confused music with mathematics. She had never liked to study in school and I suspected that her organ teacher was not the best in the world. The best in the world was Guilmant, and I stirred in her mind the dream of going to him in Paris, when her father's affairs were stabilized. We read diaries of Catholic missionaries, in the early days of America's settlement, in which those good men told with awe of the ritual dances of the savages who after a battle would enact for the benefit of those who stayed at home the scenes of the triumph which had taken place. Seated side by side in the library, beneath the portrait of Calvin, we visualized the scenes enveloped in the great silence of the forest, the painted braves in the center, the squaws and elders in a semicircle with drums before them, and as the dancers moved from right to left, those seated in front would cause the rumble of the drums to follow after them.

We read of good Saint Gregory and the crude organs

which had bellows like bagpipes, squeezed by credulous monks. We learned of the feasts of the Norsemen, where harpstrings were broken like spaghetti by the fingers of drunken heroes. The spirit of old processions and orgies crept into her interpretations. Her newly awakened interest kept her cheeks becomingly flushed and her gray-blue eyes first deep, then shining. I realized I was doing, in a subtler way, what my shameful scruples forbade in the open.

Beatrice often sat with us when Mary played, responsive to each wave of sound, moving like a panther in her chair. Music made her fierce and insatiable, or sometimes gentle and utterly relaxed. She did not confuse it with love nor with passion, because I had been more honest with her. But she did envy Mary the prospects of Paris and London, since her invalid mother made it necessary for her to remain near home. No one in her house paid the slightest attention to her movements, for the place had never been really a home to her and she had always made the practice of visiting certain of her girl friends on every possible occasion. My landlady no longer pretended not to notice our coming and going, and always spoke to Beatrice admiringly and cordially. But she raised my rent, and I paid the increase gladly, thinking it was the least I could do to show my appreciation of the fact that things were so much better than they had been before.

ABOUT the middle of March, seventeen months after the rally in Mechanics Hall, the case of Griffin vs. Moore was opened in the Suffolk County Court. There was some mention in the various newspapers of what had led up to it, but the previous evening, after a sensational twenty-six round bout, the heavyweight championship of the world had changed hands so the libel story had one paragraph on the front page and was continued inside the paper. Nobody seemed to care much.

Mr. Griffin did not drive up to the courthouse behind his span of thoroughbreds, but walked there from the North Station, incalculably nervous, and because the courtroom was crowded had some little difficulty in getting in. The crowd was similar to that which attended the burlesque shows and which had been present in Mechanics Hall, no better, no worse.

Because the trial was covered by a set of reporters unfamiliar with its details, and not by the legislative men who knew all about it, I was bombarded with questions and was obliged seven times to spell Mr. Griffin's middle name. I had nearly forgotten it myself. Governor Moore was not in the courtroom promptly at ten, but came in busily, fresh from the barber, fifteen minutes later and took his place on the defendant's bench. The jurymen were a sad lot,

weary and dyspeptic, but nothing could be done about that. I was glad that the majority of them were Irish, for Moore had once been a member of the A.P.A. and just at that time was helping, as his protégé, a prominent Jewish banker in the House of Representatives. If I had been called upon to open our case, I should have been lost, for I am very awkward when I try not to use long words, but I had faith in Mr. Perkins who already had made a good impression. He was dressed as I had first seen him, when he defended the two old ladies, in his swallow-tail coat and enormous tie and as he began his opening remarks, he held his glasses in his right hand and waved them gently for emphasis. He had planned to be brief at first, and to save his thunder for the moment when he should have Moore on the stand.

"Gentlemen of the Jury," he said. "I do not propose to bore you or to keep you sitting here forever. This case has been used as a political football too long."

Judge Sawyer was a patient, diplomatic man and George F. Peabody, Moore's attorney, was an eminent practitioner of the soft-spoken, insinuating type, tall and sandy-haired, with an amiable countenance covered with freckles. The latter raised his eyebrows gently at this prompt violation of court etiquette but offered no objection. The judge took no offense. He had a judicial mind and recognized the truth in Mr. Perkins' unparliamentary observation.

"I propose to show," Mr. Perkins continued, "that the defendant, whose immaculate appearance and ingenuous smile will offer you solace for having kept you waiting fifteen minutes (and here he let out the full dynamics of his voice, startling everybody), maliciously lied about my client in order to obtain through fraud a high office in this commonwealth. I propose to outline briefly the defend-

ant's whole career of falsehood and hypocrisy, to expose to you the character he tries so hard to cover up sartorially, to remove from his smooth face the smile he wears and replace it with a blush of shame. That last will be hardest of all, gentlemen.

"The damages my client asks are nominal. No sum of money is adequate to pay for a damaged reputation, for having been subjected in the service of the people of this commonwealth to calumny and unwarranted abuse. If a crook, however well dressed, can say what he likes about a respectable citizen, merely because the latter is candidate for the governorship and stands in the way of unscrupulous and ambitious men, the doors of this courthouse and of every other courthouse in the land had better be closed and barred. I shall show you there were no extenuating circumstances, no chances for error. I shall explain to you that free government itself is in the balance and not merely the fate of a pair of individuals."

As he spoke of justice, the conventional representation of it, in the form of a female figure holding a pair of scales, came to my mind. In the atmosphere of the courtroom, face to face with twelve representative men, I could not accept that symbol. Justice, I concluded, was a rather mild and musty old ape, fingering himself absent-mindedly.

Mr. Peabody had a long string of witnesses to offer and proceedings were stopped for a whispered conference before the judge. The Governor had so many things to attend to that he asked to be excused for a while. I heard Mr. Perkins roar.

"No doubt this is a trivial matter to Mr. Moore, your Honor. Probably he has slandered a man every day of his life. The business of the state went on very well before he

stole the governorship. Let it go on without him this morning. It is he, with his horde of witnesses, who is confusing the issue and delaying his final downfall."

Governor Moore smiled and shrugged his shoulders, electing to remain. Captain Tewksbury took the stand, and testified the facts as to his dealings with the sergeant-at-arms, who, most unfortunately for us, had died. He read certified bills showing the current prices of mahogany and stated, as its foremost importer, that neither Griffin and Tewksbury nor he, himself, had made one cent on the transaction. Mr. Peabody was looking out the window, smiling appreciatively at the indignation of the old sea captain and the rage with which the latter looked at the defendant, as if he were momentarily about to attack him. When the moment came for cross-examination, Mr. Peabody arose and asked, very softly,

"How many years have you been importing mahogany, Captain?"

"Forty years, sir," Captain Tewksbury replied.

"And how many trips a year?"

"Three or four."

"Very good. . . . Now, how many trips did you make last year, Captain?" I saw the trick, but there was nothing to do about it.

"One," the Captain said.

"That's all," Mr. Peabody said, reassuringly. And he bowed to Mr. Perkins to continue. Erothius Randall was called, and gave an excellent account of himself, testifying as to the details of the transaction, the records of which had passed through his hands. Mr. Peabody asked him no questions. Mr. Griffin was called.

"Perhaps the witness would like to remain seated," Mr. Peabody suggested. The newspaper men stirred.

"I am able to stand, thank you," Mr. Griffin replied. In response to Mr. Perkins' questions, he testified that he had left the conduct of his business entirely in the hands of his partner and his son and that neither the transaction in question nor any other which took place during his term as Governor had been brought to his attention. It was impossible for any man to suspect him of falsehood. Mr. Perkins, sensing the sympathetic attitude of the jury, stopped at just the proper moment.

"Just one question, Governor," Mr. Peabody said, giving Mr. Griffin his former title by courtesy, as was the custom with ex-Governors, "you say that you left the business in the hands of your son . . . ?"

"Perhaps I ought to explain," Mr. Griffin added, "that my son left the factory for another position in July."

"Oh, I see," Mr. Peabody said. "Then he really knew nothing about the deal Captain Tewksbury had made. That's all, thank you."

My head was throbbing with apprehension and disappointment. My court experience had been limited, but the motive behind Mr. Peabody's questions was apparent to me. It seemed unanswerable, false and distorted as it was. Not Governor Griffin's integrity but Captain Tewksbury's was to be assailed, putting a totally different complexion on the issue. No one could hope to prove Mr. Griffin a grafter, but because of his modesty and confusion it would be easy to make him out a dupe. If Mr. Perkins saw this danger, he surely gave no sign. Just before the noon recess, one of our witnesses, a clerk at the bank, referred to the defendant as Governor Moore.

"If a man should steal a street car," Mr. Perkins interrupted brusquely, "would you call him Conductor?"

Mr. Peabody started to object, then thought better of it.

"No, sir," the witness replied.

"Then why do you call the defendant Governor?" Mr. Perkins roared.

"After all," Mr. Peabody objected, "there are some rules."

"There are rules of decency in political campaigning, too," retorted Mr. Perkins, just in time to get in ahead of the judge who called them both to order.

I realized that Mr. Peabody, in preparing his case, had been careful to avoid spectacular features on account of the publicity. He planned to put the jury and the reporters to sleep by hour after hour of monotonous technical testimony which had little bearing upon the issue but because of the time it consumed and the deadening effect upon the listeners would do much to spoil the trial as a news story.

Mr. Griffin, after luncheon, did not smoke his customary cigar. His stomach was troubling him again. I did not relish my food much better, for the trap into which Captain Tewksbury had been maneuvered was gnawing into my mind. Suddenly I became capable of quick thinking and rushed away without taking time to consult Mr. Perkins. In a saloon near T wharf I found the second mate of the *Silas Coggswell*, fortunately sober.

"Mark," I said, "I want you to come with me." And on the way to the courthouse I explained what was wanted. I told him what he must testify,—that the *Silas Coggswell*, having been used so many years, had been badly in need of repair at the period in question and had been laid up several months in the drydock.

"What's up?" he asked, repeating the dates to himself.

"I'll tell you later," I said. "This will help Captain Tewksbury."

"If you want my right eye, too, just sing out," the second mate said.

After our other witnesses had been examined and cross-examined, Mr. Perkins asked permission to have Mark called and turned the examination over to me. His voice was getting tired. As I brought out the facts I had manufactured, with no trouble at all on Mark's part, I thought I saw the glimmer of a smile cross George Peabody's face. He was a splendid trial lawyer and loved his work. But his first witness was another organ manufacturer, and for two hours and a half he got into the records the decline of the organ business and the way in which sales had dropped off.

"Is that condition general throughout the trade?" Mr. Peabody finally asked.

"I object," roared Mr. Perkins. "This is all extraneous."

"Objection sustained," said the judge, who had been counting pigeons on the windowsill.

For two more days the case dragged on, until the crowd thinned out in the courtroom and the reporters spent their time upstairs playing cards except when a messenger tipped them off. Mr. Griffin was baffled, and so was Captain Tewksbury. They had expected that business would be done in a court somewhat directly and tersely and the maze of technicalities and purposeful delays left them fatigued and dull. Mr. Griffin, particularly, was disappointed. He had never been in court before and for months had been keeping up his spirits in the expectation of a prompt and decisive victory. Governor Moore grew more self-satisfied and genial. He patted the reporters on their shoulders, chatted with witnesses, apologized profusely to the judge when he was called to the telephone. But when at last it was his turn to take the stand, the vacant seats filled quickly and the newspaper men rushed to their table. The

last preceding witness had been the man who had informed Moore of the mahogany purchase by the sergeant-at-arms. He had brought the matter to the attention of the defendant the day before the rally in Mechanics Hall, he said.

On that date, according to the newspapers, Moore had spoken in Haverhill and the witness gave his address as Boston. This was explained during examination, but a trifle too carefully I thought and just as Moore was about to give his testimony a detective I had employed came to my side and whispered:

"He's a second cousin to O'Rourke."

I was elated at that development and hoped to make the best of it later, but I broke off my planning in order to hear Moore's direct testimony. It was maddening how smoothly it went. Each track seemed to have been covered, each motive purified. The preparations he was making to exonerate Mr. Griffin by making him out a fool and the focus of the defense on Captain Tewksbury and the conditions of the organ business proceeded step by step until Mr. Peabody said:

"Perhaps, Governor, you would be willing to say that in view of facts which have later come to your attention, you believe that Governor Griffin was innocent of intent to defraud the state?"

"Thank you for nothing," Mr. Perkins said, and Mr. Peabody shrugged his shoulders and turned his witness over for cross-examination.

I think the forty minutes which ensued will never be forgotten by a man or woman who was in that courtroom. I bit the skin from my lips, clenched my hands until my arms ached to the shoulders, wept, recanted all my aspersions upon justice. Not even Mr. Peabody, who knew well the caliber of the man he was up against as well as that

of the man he was defending, was prepared for any such display. The jurymen slapped each others' knees and became almost grotesque with masochistic glee.

It was as if Mr. Perkins had listed in his mind the weaknesses of Moore's character and applied sufficient pressure to each in turn to break it down and show it to the jury in its worst light. Facts mattered little, and he did not try to elicit them. He set out to demonstrate that Moore was a crook, a hypocrite and a coward and in doing so he opposed to the traits of the defendant Mr. Griffin's sterling qualities. Moore had always been vain. His over-solicitude for his personal appearance and the care he took to appear busy made that clear to a man of Mr. Perkins' perspicacity. In the beginning, he looked Moore over, ironically, knit his shaggy eyebrows and said with contempt:

"And so *you* were chosen Governor of Massachusetts?"

The Governor had been flattered so much, at home, in the State House, wherever he went, that he winced and grew angry at once. He could not bear to be made ridiculous, publicly. Mr. Perkins began to seesaw, craftily getting the defendant to follow a little too far the policy of appeasing Mr. Griffin, as his attorney had instructed him to do, then suddenly bringing out the text of the abuse he had heaped upon Mr. Griffin's head in Mechanics Hall. Moore could not straddle very long, nor could he keep his temper.

"What kind of perfume do you use?" Mr. Perkins broke out, suddenly. "Isn't bay rum good enough?" Then....

"What do you understand graft to mean?"

I believe Mr. Griffin was more miserable at that juncture of the trial than at any other moment, for it was Moore's duplicity, as a fellow Christian, which had shocked him so badly at first and for him to witness the public disintegra-

tion of a person's character was painful, whatever the man had done to him. He wanted exoneration, but not at the expense of his belief in mankind. Captain Tewksbury, who had seen many a bull fight, had no such qualms.

Moore seemed no longer to be one person, but two,—the one he had pretended to be and the man he was. I have seen the copy of a masterpiece beside the original and have marveled at the way in which the brush strokes of the master seemed to move and blend themselves after centuries of fixation. The copyist invariably errs by correcting distortions which the artist made for purposes of beauty and emphasis. At both extremes of Mr. Perkins' seesaw, Moore tried to hedge and each time lost his balance.

"You intended, then, to give Governor Griffin an opportunity to answer your charges?"

"Certainly," Moore replied.

"And you knew, did you not, that ninety-seven men in the employ of your campaign manager were in the hall, instructed to cause a disturbance when you had finished speaking?"

"I had nothing to do with that," the defendant said, then flushed as he caught his own error. "There was no one hired by us, to my knowledge," he said.

"Is Montague in the room?" asked Mr. Perkins, suddenly turning to me.

"Just outside," I answered. I had never heard of Montague, but the ruse had its effect upon Moore.

"No doubt we had asked a certain number of friends to come, to be sure of a square deal," Moore volunteered.

"At two dollars or two fifty?" asked Mr. Perkins.

Moore answered nothing.

"Speak up," said Mr. Perkins, as if he were addressing a pickpocket.

"No one was paid," Moore said.

"Very likely!" Mr. Perkins said. "You swindled them, too." The judge was obliged to caution the audience not to express approval or disapproval.

I was watching the jury carefully and more and more I was disturbed by the attitude of one man who sat nearest the defendant and seemed to be trying in little ways to attract his attention. He was a man of Moore's own type, except that he was lean and not so spic and span. He looked to me like the kind of person who sends dishes back in cheap restaurants and gets more indignant if the waitress is polite about it.

Gradually, as Mr. Perkins stretched himself to his full height and progressively let out his voice, Moore's smile grew fixed, then waxen, then it disappeared and left him with a shorn, almost naked appearance. The perspiration had wilted his collar and his eyes were mean and vindictive.

"Are you ill?" Mr. Perkins asked. Moore was almost trapped into saying he was. He had reached a state where he could answer no question candidly. He floundered and looked at Mr. Peabody.

"Is your client ill?" Mr. Perkins asked Mr. Peabody, with magnificent sarcasm. "He doesn't seem to know."

Then Mr. Perkins calmly proceeded to finish off his victim. From the moment he had begun his cross-examination, it had appeared that his own actions and words had been nicely calculated and those of the defendant badly improvised. The process which followed was not so much examination as hypnosis and I felt the effect of it myself. Moore was utterly helpless and Mr. Peabody in consternation, for Mr. Perkins, in the decades he had spared his will, had been exercising it by his restraint, and had developed such a tremendous reserve force that when he

called upon it, the result was like sending picked troops against war-weary volunteers. The spectacle was not pretty, even to me. I began to share Mr. Griffin's distaste for the ignominious exhibition of a fellow creature. Moore's countenance was no longer defiant or cunning. It was distorted. He looked like a wrestler being wracked by a toehold. Can this be real, I asked myself, for I had never seen Mr. Perkins act unkindly before. I knew later what it cost him.

"And *you* were chosen Governor of Massachusetts!"

That motif recurred until it became unbearable. My own nerves throbbed and twanged. I tried to consider it all as a dramatic performance, with Mr. Perkins as avenger, but that made it no less forcible or terrible. I was afraid the jury and the audience would react out of pity, but just at the right second Mr. Perkins swiftly brought the ordeal to a close.

"Admit you stole the election!" he shouted, drawing himself up majestically and taking a sudden step toward the witness box. Moore, livid and trembling, instinctively threw an arm across his face. "You cannot lie to me, you swine!"

There was a second of silence, before a woman fainted, and in it Mr. Perkins tossed back his head, spread out his enormous right hand, and swept his extended arm from Moore toward the jurymen.

"There is your Governor, gentlemen," he said. "Do what you like with him!"

And he sank quickly to his seat, half-closing his eyes, his chest heaving, his breath rasping his throat. I rushed to his side but he motioned me away and did not try to rise until the courtroom was nearly empty. He had timed his climax to coincide with the closing hour, so the effect could not be dimmed.

[IV]

I WAS exhausted and restless that evening but in no mood for drink. Drinking should be done for its own sake, and not for the purpose of raising one's spirits. I found it difficult to read, my legs ached so that I did not care to walk the streets, so I went to bed too early and could not go to sleep. The clock struck eleven. I lay there, twisting up the bedclothes and trying to decide what I should do when the trial was over, while fragments of the afternoon's testimony and of my whole curious career since the day I had entered the State House interrupted whatever I was thinking about and passed on.

The telephone jangled in the lower hall, annoying me all out of proportion to its muffled sound. An error, I said to myself, for no one telephoned my rooming house so late. The other tenants were quiet in the evening and went to bed long before I did and no one had ever telephoned me there. In fact I kept my address pretty much a secret, feeling security in the knowledge that I could not easily be found.

The telephone rang again. Nobody stirred. The landlady evidently had not heard it. I was determined not to get up merely to inform a girl that she was mistaken, so I lay where I was and cursed as the bell began ringing almost steadily, first in dots and then long dashes. I heard some

one moving in the hall and the voice of the landlady, quite put out.

"Hello...yes..." she said.

"They want you, Frank," she called up the stairs. "It's the police station. Are you awake?"

I was astonished and as I dressed hurriedly the thought crossed my mind that Lottie might have got a lonesome snootful and fallen into the hands of a strange officer. Nothing she had ever done justified my conjecture, but I had to explain the call in some way and that possibility suggested itself.

"Hello," I said.

I heard the voice of Mr. Perkins, hoarse and greatly agitated. "Come down to Station 3," he said. "Come right away."

Station 3 was at the foot of Joy street, three minutes' walk from where I was. I hurried down the street, still puzzled but very anxious because of Mr. Perkins' tone. I thought he had been hurt, run over by a carriage, perhaps. I almost ran down the hill to prevent worse fears from overtaking me. When I entered the ill-smelling and dingy station only the desk sergeant was in the outer room. I had seen the patrol turn the corner of Cambridge street.

"Where's Asa Perkins?" I asked, out of breath.

"In number two," the sergeant said, I thought a bit apologetically. "Jim," he called to a patrolman in the back room. "Take this gentleman to number two."

I found Mr. Perkins, disheveled, pacing the cell with his battered felt hat pulled down hard on his head.

"Those miserable scoundrels," he said, trying to control himself. When I learned what had happened I was more indignant than he was. He told me the story quite calmly, too calmly to reassure me, for I knew there was nothing

but murder in his mind. It was a Wednesday night and Eileen had joined him just outside the courtroom. She had never heard him in court before and had slipped into the back row without his knowing it to listen to his cross-examination of Moore. Seeing he was so tired, she had cooked a simple dinner for him and put him right to bed. They had gone to sleep.

At half past ten o'clock, he had been aroused by heavy footsteps in the hall and before he was thoroughly awake was brought out of bed by a crash upon the door. Four men,—an officer in uniform, two plain clothes men and an agent of the Watch and Ward Society,—had broken down the door and subdued him when he started to attack them. I got more of the details from Eileen than from him, for the mention of the incident robbed him of his powers of articulation. Only at his insistence had the men retired to the hallway to give them a chance to dress. The landlady and the other tenants had stood in their doorways in all states of curiosity or collapse while Mr. Perkins and Eileen were led down the stairs and loaded into the wagon which was waiting outside. The Watch and Ward agent went with them to prefer the charges.

"Where is Eileen?" I asked. That was troubling Mr. Perkins much more than his own situation. They had taken her to the woman's section of headquarters on Somerset street, where at that moment she was being searched by the female attendants employed there.

I arranged bail first for Eileen and then for Mr. Perkins, and I thought in both cases the officer who named the figure looked uneasy as he placed the amount so high. Both of them were bound to appear in the police court the following morning and I had hoped the reporters would not hear about the arrest but as we were leaving

Somerset street station they came rushing in, and I was sure from their attitude that they had been expecting something. There were too many of them together. I gave them a false name for Eileen and asked them to omit the name of Mr. Perkins but since he was already such a prominent figure in the news then on the press I realized my request could not be granted. They were all sorry for the part they had to play, but it was their job.

None of us could sleep, it was cold on the streets, so we went to my room and waited for morning, playing three-handed hearts. The cards went round, one after the other, changing their arrangements and patterns like a sluggish kaleidoscope, and we dulled our faculties until breakfast time. I had been made further indignant by the fact that the police captain had insisted upon having Mr. Perkins in the police court at the hour the trial before the Suffolk County Court was to be continued.

"There's nothing I can do about it," he had said doggedly, and I was convinced he was working under definite instructions on that point.

Only once during the night Eileen broke down, believing she had been the cause of hurting Mr. Perkins' reputation.

"My dear, it is an honor to be found with you," he said, and she flung herself into his arms. I saw nothing ridiculous in the tableau at the time. The memories of those hours are so filled with blue lights, gongs, strange voices and drab interiors of stations that they are tinged with an almost superstitious horror. Some manifestations of human institutions seem so degrading to me that I am more depressed by them than Mr. Griffin could be at the failure of an individual to reach a decent standard. To Mr. Perkins the situation was not at all comical, for along with his easy philosophy was an incongruous zeal for personal lib-

erty and this was the first occasion on which these mental tendencies had so violently clashed. He bore up well, but with none of his hitherto unfailing humor.

All of us, dazedly playing cards, had forgotten the papers and when I excused myself to get them I saw upon the stand large headlines about Mr. Perkins' arrest and small ones about his grilling of Moore. But what brought me to a paroxysm of laughter was the pair of pictures which accompanied the story in the second journal I examined, for the woman in the case was unmistakably Lottie Bacon. A hurried reporter, who had seen her with Mr. Perkins during our campaign in western Massachusetts, had jumped at the wrong conclusion and, enclosed with black lines, was Lottie's excellent pedigree and a description of her home in Louisburg square. That shook Mr. Perkins out of his despondency and he went about his preparations for the morning with a lighter heart. He would conduct his own and Eileen's case in the police court, pay the fines and hurry to the county court to be in time for the closing argument, he said. We all had breakfast, walked a bit, and then dispersed to our separate courtrooms. Now I surely do not suspect George W. Peabody of participating in the frame-up of which we were the victims but he did not fail to take full advantage of it. He had read the papers and when he saw Mr. Perkins was absent he cut his own formalities to ten minutes and to my horror I found that, as Mr. Perkins' associate, I was expected to close our case.

Everybody, including the jurymen, was disappointed. They had looked forward to hearing Mr. Perkins again, so I started not only with the handicap of nervousness and inexperience but with that of a disdainful audience as well. The result is too obvious to dwell upon. I made a ghastly exhibition of myself, ashamed for my client, who

sat dejectedly in his chair in the throes of indigestion, for my absent colleague and for the whole great farce of the law. One thing alone was in my favor. I had ceased to care what happened.

"Your Honor and gentlemen of the jury," I began, annoyed that my voice was so thin, "I regret that further despicable machinations on the part of the scoundrel whom we call the defendant..."

"Oh, really..." objected Mr. Peabody, but I shouted him down.

"...have taken my colleague to another court this morning, charged with..."

Mr. Peabody had risen and had motioned to the judge who interrupted me sharply.

"You must confine your arguments to the case before us," he said, indulgently.

"Oh, never mind that," I retorted and Mr. Peabody laughed aloud. A more skillful lawyer, no doubt, could have let the jury know what had happened but in spite of my whispered insistence to the judge that the facts had a bearing on Mr. Moore's character, he would not allow me to proceed along that line. Mr. Griffin had been badly shocked again. He had no idea that his old friend had habits which he had formerly considered loose, and would not have stayed in court for the rest of the trial if he had not believed he was compelled by law to remain.

In order to forestall any attempt to prove that Mr. Griffin had been in need of money I offered to prove that the contents of one room in his house at Eastford was worth more than all the mahogany the Grand Army had ever possessed, including the load Captain Tewksbury had sold the sergeant-at-arms. I brought out that the man who said he had informed Moore of the deal, the night before the

Mechanics Hall rally, was a relative of the Mayor of Boston who had delivered over his wardful of voters, as if they had been tagged like turkeys, to Moore the following Tuesday. I read a deposition from the informer stating that he had delivered the message in Haverhill while Moore had testified that he had come to Boston later on the evening of the Haverhill rally and had learned about the scandal at the Adams House. All the time I was watching the door, hoping Mr. Perkins would arrive, but when he did show up I was nearly through and saw he was in no condition to assume the responsibility. He had been bound over for contempt of court, for when white-haired Judge Murphy had let Eileen off easily with an admonition that she lead a better life Mr. Perkins had shouted "Merde" and Judge Murphy understood French much better than human nature. Mr. Peabody left the jury in a muddle, scrambling the issues with all his skill. I saw that he was playing for a disagreement, not hoping to win outright because of Moore's poor showing under cross-examination. The juryman on the end was blatantly receptive to every word he said.

The judge delivered pointless instructions and the jurymen filed out. We waited an hour, then Mr. Perkins grew despondent again and took Mr. Griffin away. At eight o'clock that night, the foreman announced that the jury had been unable to agree upon a verdict. The morning papers treated it as a victory for Moore and read as if the case were closed. It was. I did not blame myself, however badly I had argued, for I know nothing could have induced that single juryman to decide against Governor Moore. The vote, actually, was ten to two in our favor, but the two were obdurate.

Mr. Griffin went to Eastford alone. Not even Mr. Perkins

felt equal to comforting him. Before the evening was over, Mr. Perkins vowed he would not stay another day in Massachusetts and would never enter its boundaries again. He decided to take Eileen to Ireland, where she could visit her birthplace, and have her join him later in London, where he would spend the rest of his days.

"Come over as soon as you can, Frank," he said, as I left the deck of the *Cedric* before the gangplank was lowered. Eileen had a separate stateroom, for he was still afraid the authorities would make trouble. I shook his hand, acted unconcerned and awkward, and as the liner pulled out saw his faded raincoat and old felt hat disappear beside the flutter of Eileen's handkerchief. He let the commonwealth keep the bail and enter upon the records his conviction by default of one of the most common states of mind among adults the world over,—contempt of court.

"Everything was all right until you came around," said Miss Zinc, in tears, when I handed her six months' pay.

"FATHER, what is a statutory charge?" asked Mary at the supper table one evening.

"Why, I don't know. What is it, Frank?" said Mr. Griffin, passing the question over to me. When Mary saw that I hesitated to answer, she went on:

"It said in the paper that Mr. Perkins and some woman were arrested on a statutory charge. I don't understand what it means."

Mr. Griffin's face turned red and he looked into his plate.

"You'll understand some other time," he said, uncomfortably. She was by no means satisfied.

"I don't see why you all keep things from me," she said.

Mary had been pasting the remainder of her clippings in the fourth of the large albums I had bought for her. Later in the evening, after her father had gone to bed, she cornered me and insisted upon an explanation. I was fairly launched into an elucidation, which I thought was due her, when I remembered what had happened the last time I had attempted such a thing and floundered frightfully. She was hurt and disappointed.

"You treat me like a baby," she said, and left me alone.

For some time my treatment of her had been on my conscience but I had so many other problems that I had found no time to clarify my relationship with her. Beatrice

had gone to California with her father and mother. It was her own suggestion. After Mr. Perkins' trouble, we had not been comfortable at Pinckney street. The slightest noise on the street or on the stairs made me so nervous that I could not act naturally and she had understood what was wrong and had said that she had better go away for a while. I do not know how she divined so much or what guided her instincts. She avoided thinking of the past or future but was always amazingly careful that each hour we spent together should be perfect. In a way, she took the outrage to Mr. Perkins harder than I did, for she was so young that she could not submit to such things without a struggle. She wrote me nearly every day and I did my best to put my ardent thoughts on paper, but her absence made me fretful and quite unstable. Having chosen to go, she could not return until her parents did. Our farewell had been spoken in the hearing room of the legislative committee on social welfare, for I was well acquainted with the State House watchmen and felt safe there from intrusion or interruption by the police.

The office on Park street was vacant and having nothing else to occupy my time I had taken the guest room at Eastford formerly occupied by Mr. Perkins and tried my best to keep Mr. Griffin from losing his hold upon life. I did not succeed very well. His neighbors and business associates had paid little attention to the charges made by Moore in the heat of a political campaign, expecting nothing better from an ordinary candidate for Governor, but after the court had upheld him in the accusations, for the failure to reach a verdict had been generally interpreted that way, I am sure that many men with whom he came in contact suspected there must have been some foundation for so

much talk. Mr. Griffin sensed that attitude and began avoiding every one except me and the members of his family. He took the train to Boston each morning at the usual hour, trying to read the *Morning Advertiser*, and I accompanied him to the factory where I spent the day watching the old German foreman tinker with organs which were really in excellent repair. Pipe organs were still in demand and now and then an order was received, but most of the men were unoccupied and expected each day that the factory would close down. I did not suggest to Mr. Griffin that he suspend business entirely for I was afraid of the effect it might have upon him. His forehead showed the faint wrinkles which I had seen the first day he called at Park street. He ate little, spoke infrequently, and began to look older than he actually was. In order to become reconciled with Mary and to keep her mind from embarrassing subjects I asked her to help me keep her father from melancholia and that effort drew us together again.

The distrust Mr. Griffin felt around him, which no doubt his mind exaggerated, was not so destructive to his health as his own disillusionment and his grief about Mr. Perkins. We had kept so much of the petty fraud and chicanery from his notice when he was Governor that he had not considered Moore's behavior as typical and had cherished his old notions about the body politic. His venture into the courts had dealt him a much more telling blow, and to have to begin to doubt such institutions and one's fellow man at the age of sixty is a serious strain. Mr. Griffin was not equal to it. He had no training, no background, no experience. That is the danger of depending on common sense. Once it ceases to be applicable, all becomes chaos.

To add to his difficulties, his supply of ready cash began to dwindle, and he could not in justice to Mary or Joe mortgage what was left of his property. The *Silas Coggs-well* was not an asset but a liability for when it should become waterlogged it would have to be towed out to sea at considerable expense and sunk. The factory was well insured, but would not burn. Fred Atwell watched his father-in-law's decline with a heavy conscience for he was quite heavily in Mr. Griffin's debt and in no position to repay his loans. That had the unfortunate effect of keeping him away from the old house.

I was the only one who knew the full extent of Mr. Griffin's losses. Nothing in the appearance of the estate indicated the true state of affairs. Charley and Melzer had planted every available acre, the orchard was thriving, the hens were laying well. But the five cent milk had caused Charley to reduce the number of cows and customers for dairy products. He had arranged with Fred to sell the flowers which formerly had gone to seed. When Sue's second baby was born, the question arose as to the ten thousand dollars for his education and Charley offered the best solution.

"It won't cost much to educate him," he said. "No child of mine shall be locked up in school one day after the law will let him out."

Mr. Griffin consented to take a month's vacation, and that time no reporters gathered on the porch at noon for raspberry punch. The story they had started concerning my engagement to Mary, however, had never died out and the whole town took it to be a fact. At any rate it helped explain my presence there constantly. The harvest was reaped, the woods turned yellow and russet and brown and Edwin T. Moore was elected by another record ma-

jority. Mr. Griffin did not vote. He had not missed an election before since he had come of age.

I tried to be patient. I did my best to enjoy the beauties of Eastford, the charm of Mary's company, the books I had rescued from Park street and which stood on the shelves beside the arid volumes Calvin had guarded so long. I thought of what Mr. Perkins would do in my place and tried to impersonate him. But day after day as Mr. Griffin slipped farther from my control and grew taciturn and incompetent, the surroundings became intolerable to me. With all my advantage of education, youth and objectivity, I saw that I should break down first and I was ashamed. My restlessness came to a crisis one Saturday afternoon. I was going to take Mary to a concert that evening, so I remained in Boston after Mr. Griffin had returned to Eastford at noon and strolled toward T wharf. The tide was high, and just ready to turn, and a cluster of Portuguese fishermen's boats with sails stained sienna and large ungainly prows were clustered at one of the landings. Gulls, cocking their heads knowingly and diving for bits of refuse, sailed serenely against the breeze, then banked and flapped their wings in the other direction. A huge foreign steamship, newly painted and flying a flag I did not recognize, was edging her way through the channel and toward the sea. I breathed the salt air, watched the smoke from the funnels at the East Boston wharves, saw the ferry creep out of its shed to meet another going eastward, heard the voices of sailors on the tugboats and felt my resolution drifting away. The air smelled of Europe. The foreign flags and accents, the haze over the sea, stirred my slumbering urge to go somewhere that was distant from where I was. I touched my pocketbook which con-

tained the blank check and tried to decide what sum my father could stand to lose at one time. He would have honored the check, I am sure, if I had written it for one hundred thousand dollars for he had always revered sportsmanship on a par with industry and perseverance.

I could visualize Mr. Perkins waiting on the pier to meet me, and the quaint old office he would have rented, in which we might do as we had done in Park street, with all the lure of the Old World setting, the bookshops older than Cornhill, the haunts of the writers we had read together. Would not Mr. Griffin do as well without me? Would I not be escaping from an uncomfortable dilemma? I did not tell Mary of my decision that evening but the music added to the spell of the waterfront. The orchestra played the Mozart E-flat symphony, the slow movement of which has always sent me into ecstasies. I wanted to visit Germany, too, and France, where such minuets had quickened the pulses of queens. I, who had always longed to leisure, had been trapped for two solid years into the most senseless tangle of work and meaningless effort. My hour for self-indulgence had come.

I did not tell Mary of my decision on the train that night nor when I held her closely and kissed her good-night at the door of her room. The next day would be Sunday and I should have a better chance to break the news, I thought.

"Frank," Mary said as I kissed her the third and fourth time, "I want you to tell me what a statutory offense is. I feel like a fool to have things like that in the newspapers and everybody around me talking about them when I don't know what they mean. I want you to promise to tell me, Frank."

So I promised and knew she would hold me to it. As I

was about to go down the hallway she whispered for me to wait.

"I want you to hold me," she said, "while I think of one of the movements of the symphony and see if you can feel which one is going through my mind."

OF course, Mary's delightful new pastime put me in a state where I could not sleep a wink. Out of perversity she had chosen the final allegro, knowing my preference for the more deliberate movement, and I had had no difficulty in following its cadences and rollicking crescendos. I do not recommend the game to restless young men, however. No sooner would I think I was calm and ready for sleep than some phrase of the music would recur and with it the tactile memory of the gentle pressure which had accompanied it. I was really almost envious of Tristram Shandy. As the night wore on, I swung from moods of elation to deep depression and was not at all relieved when the dawn streaked the sky beyond the marshlands.

What should I do about Mr. Griffin? Responsibilities take hold on me as slowly as ideas did on him but once firmly rooted they are difficult to dismiss. In case of my own family, I felt none at all. There was not a group of men, women and children in all the United States with whom I had less in common or who had less need of me. They all liked me, no doubt, but preferred to have me at a distance. Surely, before I went abroad, I must put Mr. Griffin's will in order. We had talked about it at the time Charley was married (I had begun to consider his first marriage in Connecticut as a sort of rehearsal, like Fred's)

but had reached no definite conclusion. Joe had no interest whatever in girls, and I was able no longer to conceal from myself the fact that he was so constituted that he was not likely to develop any such interest. He had no place in society at all and since his work threw him constantly with men and he understood less than nothing about the complexities of his nature, he was aware of no desire to alter his situation. As he grew more pale his long eyelashes threw shadows beneath his eyes and his hands twitched nervously as he talked. If Mr. Griffin had been so genuinely surprised to find that Mr. Perkins was not a technical bachelor what would he say if I were able to make Joe's status clear? There was no hope. All the cant about frankness falls down before the fact that a quart of milk cannot be poured into a pint jar.

Mr. Griffin himself was just beyond my range of influence. I could not seem to reach him. He was polite and appreciative but acted always as if he would like to hide. The front he presented was like one of the dens in Franklin park when the bear is sleeping out of sight in some inner cave. The aroma of bay rum and cigars was there, the coat and vest and rows of buttons, but where was Mr. Griffin? It was harder every day for him to greet acquaintances on the street and at the same time he pretended more and more openly to believe that his business was going on as it always had. He fumbled with old envelopes, looked around if Erothius Randall seemed to have nothing to do, hurried back to the factory after lunch as if he were busy, complained if the combustible oils and bits of carpet were not well cared for. His employees were forced to join in the game and to help deceive him. Erothius rattled papers and climbed over counters. The workmen kept rags and brooms by their side and started dusting or sweeping when

the boss appeared. Even I, who was pretending to take a thorough inventory, was impelled to jot down figures or think of unnecessary questions to ask in order to make my presence appear plausible. I had written Mr. Perkins at length about the situation and he had done his best to help me from a distance but he, himself three years Mr. Griffin's senior, was loath to put upon paper that one must expect, as men get along in years, a certain decline of their faculties. I wanted to roll in the grass and weep for death and the passage of time, as Mary had done, but I should have thought of grass stains or some such thing if I had tried it.

I tried to concentrate my mind upon the will. Mattie was taken care of, so was Anne, although I knew she watched each cent that went to the others and would have complained openly if she had not been taught through many years that her father could not be coerced. Perhaps he could, in his present condition. Mary's lot, with the magnificent orchard, was intact, and the securities I controlled would provide her with funds for a house if they were not liquidated too soon. Charley was really content, with Sue, Melzer and the baby. His small house on the pasture land was just what he wanted, for he had never liked the roominess and frail bric-à-brac of the homestead. My idea of suggesting a public museum no longer pleased me. It would be better for the Louis XIV chairs and the MacIntire carvings, the bronze candlesticks and porcelains and cut glass goblets, to remain in their places unseen and undisturbed than to have groups of middle-western tourists pawing through the house and tracking mud on the Brussels carpets. That had happened to some splendid old places in Salem and elsewhere. I should have preferred giving the whole place back to Mrs. Ebenezer Hoag if I

had not known that Mrs. Bartholomew and Anne would in that case have got their clutches on it. I could sympathize with Anne, somewhat, but I could no longer like her. She had made a distinct advance, from a social standpoint, conducted herself creditably among the Crowningshields and Treadwells and Frothinghams, and in a circle which still held a mild disdain for the revolution of 1776, the popular rebuke to Mr. Griffin had enhanced rather than hurt her standing. For that, I bowed to her new associates. In fact, I liked some of them very well. They were more gracious than she was.

I wished that I were less impressionable, for the unhealthy atmosphere of the factory, the senile make-believe which had none of the charm inherent in the play of children, was driving me insane. My trip abroad must be postponed until the will was drawn, of that I was certain. And what about Mary? I thought at times that I could view more philosophically the entrance of Beatrice into some conventional existence, having created with her a fund of memories which could only be spoiled by our carelessness in preserving them. She was already safeguarded in a way from the swindlers who offer tawdry social goods to unsuspecting young girls. She could take care of herself.

Mary, on the other hand, with candor in her gray-blue eyes, would wander about for explanations and would be thrown off the track of her best impulses by my pusillanimous treatment of her. I still wished to keep those girls substantially as they were, to admire them, to touch them, to watch their exquisite maturity. I still was unfit to assume the responsibilities which might entitle me to such privileges. Inasmuch as I was familiar with the rise and fall of Babylon, Nineveh, Athens and Rome I could not expect

to go on indefinitely performing the bass parts of silent symphonies with Mary for a string section. Oh, well, my thinking got me nowhere. I got up, dressed, dropped in on Sue for a cup of coffee and walked all over the marsh, resolving that whatever happened to me, Mary should not go on with the notion, if she had one, that Mr. Perkins had committed sin or crime, or even a misdemeanor.

Really I suppose my conscience was troubling me, for undoubtedly I have the New England variety, but like my mysticism, turned inside out. No sin of commission can remain very long on my mind. The gamut of human actions is pitifully narrow, at best, and I consider it merely a matter of the length of life and wealth of one's opportunity to determine the number of different things a man will do. But sins of omission are much more grave. They are truly inescapable. What did not happen to Mary, through my cowardice, might haunt me the remainder of my days.

I got back from my long futile tramp across the marshes just in time to meet the folks of Eastford going to church. Mary still dutifully played the organ but Mattie was too busy with her children and Anne had turned high Episcopalian, some of her neighbors considered it practically Catholic and wondered why Mr. Griffin failed to disown her. While the house was empty, I amused myself by glancing through Mary's scrapbooks, strange relics of our trip through the hinterland of politics. The high spot, of course, was Lottie's regretful denial of her guilt with Mr. Perkins. She had really saved him from committing violence, I believe, for, holding the cause for libel over the heads of the owners and editors of the paper which had committed the picturesque error, she had printed the following statement from which she forebade them to delete

a single word, and a large cartoon of her, drawn while we were all in the Berkshires, accompanied it at her request.

"I am sorry to say," the statement read, "that in spite of a lifetime of tactful suggestion on my part, Asa Leander Perkins has never made dishonorable proposals to me nor committed illegal acts. Moreover, and unfortunately, I can prove it."

Her mother would have driven her from home if she had not wanted to have her nearby in order to remonstrate more bitterly with her.

I heard footsteps on the porch, several persons, scuffling, I thought. I hurried to the door as Mr. Griffin was being lifted from a carriage by the young minister and two or three deacons. Mary was sobbing on Melzer's shoulder.

"Be careful going up the stairs," the minister said. He had a soothing voice, as if he were constantly consoling those about him. I saw that, although the usual hour had not arrived, the members of the congregation were standing in awed groups on the platform of the church or were walking uncertainly down the lane.

"He's had a shock," the minister said to me. "Had we better take him upstairs? He's conscious, but one side is paralyzed."

I led the way to Mr. Griffin's bedroom, then hurried to Mary's side. She was utterly helpless with grief and for hours, while the doctor rushed in and out and Mattie took general charge, I was obliged to stay at her side, bathing her eyes and her forehead and speaking meaningless words, to keep the minister from usurping my place and making a worse mess of it.

"What about it?" I asked the doctor.

"He may get better, for a while," he said. "He may be

able to walk again, but this is only the preliminary warning. The next time it will be more severe."

"Keep it between us, for a while," I said, and he agreed.

The dinner spoiled in the kitchen, for none of us could eat it. Fred's phonograph, the old-fashioned one with the cylinder records which Mattie had taken to her upstairs living room, had been shut off abruptly. Usually on Sundays, she entertained the babies with Uncle Josh or Whistling Rufus, the records she herself preferred. Anne's guests began arriving and some of them departed quickly, others remained and tried to reassure her. I sat by Mr. Griffin's bedside, for although it was difficult for him to talk he seemed to be more at ease when I was with him, though I was thinking hard about how I could get away, for I had never been close to death or disease and thought my nerves were unequal to the ordeal. The longer I sat, the surer I was that I should have to stay until the end and implant in my consciousness an episode so dreary that never again, perhaps, could I shake off its effects. I was ashamed to think of myself, in a house full of troubled people, but my usefulness consisted in my presence and not in the contents of my mind. The minister made me creep. I suspected that he enjoyed the whole business, in some perverse ecclesiastical way, that a group of tearful faces and the wringing of women's hands started echoes for him of seraphic choirs in the offing. The doctor was even worse. If he had put on goat's horns and waved a rattle, repeating Eeny Meeny Miny Mo as he two-stepped around the room, it would not have offended my sense of what should be as much as his pussyfooting here and there with pellets and glasses of water and patting Mary on the shoulder, altogether too familiarly, I thought, murmuring, "Well, let us see," or "How does the patient seem now?" or "That is better,"

when nothing was better at all. I was in for a frightful siege, a misfit for such a task, but what could I do?

I decided that early in the morning I would get the old will from the safe deposit vault in Boston, revise it somehow more equitably and hold the new draft in readiness in case Mr. Griffin should be able to sign it. He might get on his feet again, the doctor said, or he might die that evening. I was no nearer a solution of the problems involved in the testament than I had ever been, and the passage of time, as slowly as it progressed, had caught me unready as it always had before and always will, no doubt. My lack of sorrow or sympathy bewildered me. Surely no one could have liked or admired Mr. Griffin more than I, in his better days. It was hard to connect the figure stretched upon the bed with Mr. Griffin. That bore the same relation to my modest and lovable host as dough does to biscuits. With women it seemed to be different. Mary could touch her father's forehead just as if he were as he had been the day before. Oh, well. He had to die, I supposed, and it came over me that dying might be lonely for one who had had such a wistful desire for congenial company. Dying must be really awful, worse than going under ether or leaping from a burning building. It must be about halfway between those two operations, I concluded.

About four o'clock in the afternoon I heard voices in the hallway. It was Mrs. Bartholomew and Mrs. Ebenezer Hoag and I saw they were both in black. No one was there to receive them, for everybody was busy doing some futile thing, so I hurried down the stairway just as Mrs. Bartholomew, much more infirm than when I had seen her last, shouted to the hired girl:

"When did he die?" She had misunderstood Anne's telephone message and had communicated her error to

Mrs. Ebenezer, who at once wished she could rush back to Medford and change her dress. The old lady was much annoyed at having been called out on a wild goose chase, as she called it, and I tried to pacify her by ushering her into the living room and asking her to sit down. She was just able to stand, so was forced to accept my suggestion. She must have been eighty-nine years old. I held a chair for her and tried to guide her into it but my nervousness or something made me awkward and before I could stop her she had missed the edge of the chair and sat upon the floor with a thud which jarred the whole building. The shock took her breath away and she swallowed helplessly, wagging her head from side to side, while Mrs. Ebenezer and I tried to help her to her feet. Her legs were limp. She could not stand on them, so she sat on the floor again, berating me the moment she could get her breath and waiting for somebody to do something. The doctor came quickly downstairs, in response to my cries, and Mary looked over the banister. I could not be sure, in the subdued light and confusion, but I thought she was trying to suppress a smile.

"She must have hurt her spine," the doctor said.

"What did you think I'd hurt, young man, sitting down plunk on the floor? My Adam's apple?" she squawked.

After several trials, we found that she could not use her legs, so Melzer and Charley brought down a bed from upstairs and set it up in the living room. Mrs. Ebenezer promised to stay and take care of her until she could be moved. She was quite apologetic, but nothing could be helped. I don't know how much Mr. Griffin knew about what was going on. He moved his left eye and the fingers of his left hand now and then and made a few gargling noises when I asked him if he understood what I said. I sat with him until

midnight, hearing old Mrs. Hoag grumbling down below us as Mrs. Ebenezer waited on her, and decided further that as soon as the doctor told me there were no prospects of his getting better I would close down the organ business, if I could do so without a signed power of attorney. I should have to ask a lawyer about that. Mr. Peabody had a number of young men in his office and for a reasonable sum I figured that I could hire one of the brightest ones to conduct the liquidation properly. Then Mr. Griffin stirred and I recalled that he might get better.

THE household settled down into a weird routine, for Mr. Griffin's condition remained unchanged for several weeks before another shock put an end to the movements on his left side as well. Only his eyes were alive and how much of his brain was working not even the doctor could guess. Mary was brave and tremulous and I tried to keep her occupied as much as possible and to prevent her from clashing with the elements around the place which were hostile to her and to each other. Mattie called each day to see her father and grandmother, in their separate rooms, sitting aimlessly by the window and watching as she talked, the movements of young Gladstone and Jefferson outside.

"Whose young ones are those?" her grandmother snapped at her on one occasion. "They're running all over the lawn..." "...What say?" she shouted, when Mattie admitted feebly that they were hers. The old lady's memory got worse every day and she would not listen to any suggestions about being moved. She was quite content where she was, sitting up in bed and ordering every one around.

"We'll stay here till it's over," she grunted to Mrs. Ebenezer, jerking a thumb toward the ceiling above which Mr. Griffin lay. "Life isn't likely to last long." If it had not been for Mary's hate of Mrs. Bartholomew I should

have begun to love her. Two legs more or less meant little to her.

I believe both Mrs. Bartholomew and Mrs. Ebenezer sensed that the goods they had coveted and owned, respectively, were soon to be the object of a scramble and the old lady was unmistakably determined they should go to Anne.

"What's that man doing here?" she would ask as I passed the doorway. "What's he snooping around for?" Mrs. Ebenezer tried to quiet her, for my sake, and to explain that I was a friend of the family. She had no hopes, I think, of regaining anything she had lost but she could not bear to think of her furnishings being scattered or sold at auction. I found her so patient and understanding that I confided to her at once that I shared her feelings about the antiques and after that considered her a sort of ally. But she was terribly under the influence of the older woman, not her thoughts but her actions. She had renounced her black dress for her usual lavender and Anne served tea to her each afternoon. They seemed to have a great deal to talk about.

Fred was miserable and solicitous. He tried to think of ways in which he could help and secretly wondered what he ought to do about the money he owed and could not pay. At last I told him not to worry about that, for I held his notes for Mr. Griffin and no one else knew about them definitely. Anne had received more than her share, counting the summer house at Magnolia which only John and I knew Mr. Griffin had paid for. I was not sure there was a record of the transaction, Mr. Griffin's method of book-keeping was so loose.

The first problem I was called upon to solve directly was offered by Joe. At the time his father had had his first

shock, he was about to be sent out on the road for John's steel concern, an opportunity he had coveted for some months. He had renounced going, since his territory was to be on the Pacific coast, but when the second shock left the situation still indefinite and the doctor would not promise either improvement or termination for any specific date, Joe asked me what I thought he ought to do. I answered without hesitation that he should go. There was surely no point in his losing more business opportunities. As I talked with him I marveled that I could have known him so long without being aware of his congenital peculiarity. That is the way with each fact that is blown like a grain of dust into one's brain. It nullifies long series of previous cerebrations. Before Joe left, I mentioned to him my belief that the organ business should be discontinued. Captain Tewksbury would be more than glad to end it, I was sure. He was laid up with the gout in California. Joe agreed at once and gave me a sweeping power of attorney to act for him in anything which concerned the estate. I tucked it into the safe deposit vault, not knowing what might be useful. The factory, with its weekly payroll, was a drain upon Mr. Griffin's funds and after a talk with Charley and with Mary, I took steps to snuff out the firm of Griffin and Tewksbury.

I had written Mr. Perkins how things stood and he was deeply shocked. He answered all my questions but when in a subsequent letter I suggested turning over the details to Mr. Peabody's office he agreed that it would be wise. So one day, leaving Mary at Mr. Griffin's bedside, I started for Boston, armed with papers signed by Mattie, Charley, Mary and Joe. Anne refused to sign anything and immediately when she found out what was proposed hired another attorney from whom, after elaborate explanations, I got

oral approval of what I intended to do. He told Anne it would stop a leakage of money, so she offered no objections. She did act quite impolitely to me, however, so much so that if it had not been for Mary I should have quit the house.

Mr. Peabody, out of the courtroom, was very absent-minded. He kept talking genially, listening imperfectly to what was said to him, and smiling whimsically the while. He remembered my face and tried hard not to show that he could not place it, exactly.

"Let me see," he began. "You have filed an appeal for your client, Mr..."

"Griffin," I said. I could not bear to make him ask.

"...Mr. Griffin," he continued. "Well, I can't say that I blame you."

I got in a word to the effect that the time for filing appeal had long ago expired and that Mr. Griffin was helpless with paralysis.

"That's too bad, too bad," Mr. Peabody said, shifting his ground. "Time passes... Time passes..." At that moment he got his bearings and said, with relief:

"And how is Mr. Perkins?"

I told him Mr. Perkins was in London.

"I can't say that I blame him," Mr. Peabody said. "If I could make a living there I should live in London myself. But we all pile up so many responsibilities." He looked enviously at me. "It's good to be young and free," he remarked. I think he did not notice the tone of voice in which I agreed.

"You tell Mr. Perkins that when I heard what had happened to him, I doubled my fee," he said. "That will make him feel better."

"Did you collect it?" I asked.

"I had a hard time," he admitted. "It did me good to hear Asa give the Governor such a lacing."

When I disclosed my problems to him, he laughed and sent for one of his young associates. "I know nothing about commercial law either," he said. "Mr. Blackmer will help you."

Mr. Blackmer, indeed, proved to be very efficient. He liked music, too, and took an organ in part payment of his fee.

I don't know whether Mr. Peabody mentioned Mr. Griffin's affliction to his major client but one afternoon not long afterward an automobile turned into the driveway and when I answered the doorbell I found standing before me, immaculately dressed and unsmiling sympathetically, no other than Governor Moore. I realize that I should have slammed the door in his face, but my capacity for resentment had been exhausted in the courtroom. I might as well have insulted the man who sold Courteney Doane the soft-shelled crabs. He sat a few moments in the parlor, with Mrs. Ebenezer and me, exchanging the usual remarks on such an occasion and rode back to Boston again. Of course, the incident got into all the papers and he was given credit for doing a magnanimous thing which no doubt was instrumental in cementing the Republican party more tightly than ever. I am told that he still supports the family of the man who was killed at the rally.

The only person with whom I could discuss the question of the will was Charley. Mary gave way to grief whenever the possibility of her father's death was mentioned, and she had no feeling for property at all. I told Charley that his father had made a will a few years before, in which he specified that the land, except for the lots reserved for the girls, and the old house and its contents should go to him.

He was frankly troubled, for he wanted to accede to his father's wishes and yet he was so content in his small and solitary dwelling on Salem Road that he was anxious, without disrespect, to avoid having to move back into the quarters he had always found too large and imposing. When I explained that the furnishings were precious as objects of art and historical relics, he agreed that they should be kept intact and volunteered to let Mrs. Ebenezer live there rent free, in case no other disposition could be made. He was not willing, however, that the things should get into the hands of Anne for she had treated Sue with great disdain and he was extremely sensitive on that point. He believed Sue was as good as any one else.

"You do what you think is right," he said, which left me as badly off as ever.

We could not find out how much Mr. Griffin understood of what was said to him or whether he was able to hear at all. Reduced almost to a skeleton, he lay face upward on the bed, breathing imperceptibly and nourished in gruesome ways. I was tempted more than once to ask the doctor if he could not put an end to it, but the ethics of the medical profession are as complicated as those of the law. Mary did not feel like playing upon the organ, of course, and to study the history or theory of music while its practice was denied her was only aggravating. Instead, I got all the books I could find, in my few hours in Boston, dealing with period furniture and the various articles in the house and we spent many hours classifying chairs, tables, dishes and tapestries until she became quite awed by the considerations to which they led. Still, she never thought of owning them. Her father's condition had affected her nerves so badly that she said she was anxious to get out of Eastford. I did not blame her. We were together constantly

in the daytime and she slept so poorly that I sat up late with her each night and finally got into the habit of tucking her into bed and sitting by her side until she had gone to sleep, after which I would open her window and tiptoe out, being careful not to be seen by any one. So many days dragged on that at times we forgot about her father when we were not actually in his room.

"Mary, darling," I said to her one morning, "you know now what is meant by a statutory offense."

She frowned and said, "That's a horrid word."

"It sounds worse than it feels," I said, forgetting we had been on intimate terms but a few hours.

Each day I grew increasingly apprehensive at Anne's behavior, and at last she brought her own attorney into the house and kept him waiting there, to protect her interests in case Mr. Griffin should show signs of consciousness. The attorney thought it better not to be on good terms with me, so he sat all day with Mrs. Bartholomew, starting anxiously when he heard noises upstairs. The whole town of Eastford was aware of an impending family row and commented quite freely upon the avarice of the prospective heirs, not able to distinguish between them. I did not tell Mr. Dunbar that a valid will was resting in my safe deposit vault, and counted upon Charley to make a fair distribution of his heritage.

The occasional fear that Mr. Griffin might rally gave me many uncomfortable moments, for I did not want to have to tell him about the organ business or the quarrels Anne had precipitated between Fred and John. I noticed to my dismay one day that the Wedgwood tea set was missing from its place and that evening was unable to find other small and valuable articles. That really made me ill. I suspected Anne, without proof, and thereafter watched

her carefully. She was taking whatever she could hide in her clothing each day as she left for home.

I am a frightful coward in circumstances like that. The whole idea of wanting articles badly enough to steal them is repulsive to me and I am so ashamed in behalf of a person who is led into such an extreme that I cannot confront him. Still, it made me very angry. I finally spoke to Mrs. Ebenezer and she was as pained as I was, but braver. She tried to let Anne know that her actions had not escaped observation, which threw Anne into a frightful temper against me. She abused me and impugned my motives so bitterly that I lost my temper, in turn, and threatened to get out a search warrant and recover the things. Her attorney took her side and I said I would have him put out of the house. In the midst of it, John came in and was obliged to defend his wife. Fred heard what was going on and called John some ugly names, until Mary came downstairs and at once was more vehement than any of us. From that time on, the strain was terrible. The sheriff searched the Treadwell house, finding objects which I identified as belonging to Mr. Griffin, to a considerable value. Mr. Dunbar got an order from the court restraining us from removing them on the grounds that we could not prove ownership. The dispute became public. And all the while Mr. Griffin lay motionless on his back, perhaps aware of the bitterness his happy plans had engendered. I had heard of such quarrels, but never before had witnessed one, first hand, and the slight regard for my fellows I had nourished so long started slipping away. I believed it would be exhausted before Mr. Griffin's wasted body stopped sucking in air and puffing it out again.

HOW clear it all had seemed, as Mr. Griffin had told me of his project that day while we were lunching at Young's,—the business for Joe, house lots for the girls, so they could be neighbors, the garden for Charley, whose cultured wife would keep up the homestead. The funeral was bad enough, with hordes of politicians standing around in hired frock coats with stovepipe hats in their hands and the minister paraphrasing the famous Thanksgiving Proclamation in the eulogy which lasted half an hour. As they took my old friend's body out of the house, the cheeks stained pink and the mustache waxed, I thought of his desire for a peaceful old age and was surer of nothing else in the universe than his prospects of having it. I cannot understand why I wanted to laugh, for I had loved him as I had no other human being save Mr. Perkins. But one cannot love what has ceased to exist. One can respect it, revere it, cherish it, but that's a different thing.

In the parlor, before the organ and the space upon the wall which had contained the portrait of Ellen Hoag, I read the will. The night before he died, the hired girl, at Anne's insistence, had hung the portrait where Mr. Griffin's eyes might rest on it in the sickroom, and Mary, in a rage, had stood between him and the portrait as he breathed his last so that if he saw anything at all it was her an-

guished face. Mrs. Bartholomew Hoag insisted upon being lifted from her bed into a wheel chair and brought into the parlor, and as I read she sat with her hand cupped over one ear and shouted at me continually to repeat. Mr. Dunbar, Anne's attorney, was indignant that I had not warned him of the existence of the document and had promised her he would break it before the text was known to them. Mary sat at my left, where I could touch her arm, but before I began she burst into tears and left the room. She could not bear it, with the odor of tuberose and death still hovering there. Anne and John sat in Louis XIV chairs, across the room from Mattie and Fred. Charley and Sue stood near the doorway, defiant but uncomfortable. Joe, who was in Waco, Texas, had sent me a curt letter canceling my power of attorney, for what cause I do not know.

After a strained silence, I began:

"I, Elijah Wetherle Griffin, being of sound mind and judgment and at peace with God and mankind, do hereby decree and recommend the following disposition of my earthly goods when, according to the will of Almighty God, disposer of us all, I shall be called to leave my children until that blessed day when all souls shall be reunited for eternity."

Of course, I had worded it in a way that I thought would please him and Mr. Perkins had added a few resounding old phrases, neither of us looking forward to the day when we might have to read it aloud, in the presence of others.

"Wishing to share such of my possessions as I may before that inevitable separation and while my heirs are able to enjoy them with me, I hereby specify that such items as are deeded to the persons mentioned during my lifetime shall be held to constitute their portion, or a part thereof."

"You tell me when he gets down to business," Mrs. Bartholomew squawked to Mrs. Ebenezer, and the old lady stopped listening until I shouted:

"Item I: To my beloved daughter, Mattie, the land lying southeast of the homestead and described in detail upon the plan hereunto attached, where it is designated as Parcel 'A'; and the right half of my pew in the Eastford Congregational Church for the perpetual use of her family and her heirs."

Fred and Mattie looked self-consciously at the floor but no one paid much attention, since she had been living on the lot in question several years and never went to church because of the children.

"Item II: To my beloved son, Joseph, my share and interest in the assets, good will and profits of the firm of Griffin and Tewskbury, whose main office is at 128 Hanover Street, Boston, Massachusetts."

That was all.

"You see," whispered Anne to John and to her lawyer.

"Item III: To my beloved daughter, Anne, the land lying east and northeast of the homestead and described in detail upon the plan hereunto attached, where it is designated as Parcel 'B'; and the left half of my pew in the aforesaid Eastford Congregational Church for the perpetual use of her family and her heirs."

Fred looked at Anne's slim figure contemptuously and John glared with rage. Anne's face looked like water which is just ready to boil and she muttered to herself until her husband was obliged to restrain her.

"Item IV":

"It's an outrage," she broke out and John, whose temper Fred had aroused, said:

"Shut up until it's over!"

Mrs. Ebenezer quivered with embarrassment. It was her old home, I remembered.

"Item IV: To my beloved son, Charles, the homestead and all its contents except the personal property of his brothers and sisters, together with such land as is not included in Parcels 'A,' 'B' or 'C' of the plan hereunto attached, and all the livestock and outbuildings except the twin pair of driving horses known as Tom and Jerry,..."

"I won't listen. I'll sue you," Anne screamed, rushing to me and shaking her fist in my face. John, now devoid of self-control, grabbed her roughly by the arm and almost dragged her from the room while she continued to sob and scream abuse at me and at Charley and Sue in the doorway. When all was quiet again, Mrs. Bartholomew insisted that I read the last paragraph again so she could understand what the row was about.

"Item IV," I recommenced. "To my beloved son, Charles, the homestead and all its contents except the personal property of his brothers and sisters, together with such land as is not included in Parcels 'A,' 'B' or 'C' on the plan hereunto attached, and all the livestock and outbuildings except the twin pair of driving horses known as Tom and Jerry, all apparatus and implements and vehicles except the buggy and carryall customarily drawn by the abovementioned Tom and Jerry, with the proviso that at all times convenient he shall supply for the use of his sisters' tables milk, butter, eggs and garden produce not needed for his own use or for seed purposes, also that he shall supply from the woodlands four cords of hard wood and two cords of soft wood yearly to each of his sisters and shall shelter and protect them in case of need."

I had to think of something, as I was reading, to keep from shrieking aloud, and as I reached Item V it struck

me that Mr. Griffin had never once suggested the possibility of Joe's getting married until a few months before his death, and then only because no other alternative seemed to present itself. Had he understood Joe's nature better than I did? I hardly could believe it, and yet...

"Item V: To my beloved daughter, Mary,...

"Will you ask Mary to come down?" I suggested to Charley, and she entered the room, her face swollen with crying.

"To my beloved daughter, Mary, the land and orchard lying south of the homestead and described in detail upon the plan hereunto attached, where it is designated as Parcel 'C'; the pair of twin driving horses known as Tom and Jerry together with the buggy and carryall customarily drawn by them; all personal belongings of my deceased wife, Mary Tarr, her mother; and all musical instruments to which I have the sole right and title."

The gathering dispersed, Mrs. Bartholomew and Mrs. Ebenezer to the living room, Charley and Sue to their home, Mattie and Fred to their brood of children. The last clause in the will had provided that any personal or other property not mentioned was to be divided equally between the surviving children, which left Fred's conscience still further troubled about his unpaid loans, but Mr. Perkins, Captain Tewksbury and I were named as executors so he had little to fear. As I went to my room, I heard angry voices across the way and saw several strange children hiding behind the fence around the Treadwell house, listening. Anne was screaming and John was bellowing in their first open quarrel, the one he had spent his whole married life trying to avoid. After I had had time to cool off, I held no resentment against Anne, for she was in the grip of an instinct she could not control. Once she had given rein

to her ambitions for social and financial power she was utterly unable to check them and her frustrated sex was turned into their relentless channels. John understood nothing of psychology, fortunately for him, and decided he had married a shrew. The peace he wanted, he achieved in part by disregarding whatever she did and said, I suppose. He blamed her for not having children and she unconsciously held it against him and the doubtfulness of his parentage which had long been forgotten. He had more money than Mr. Griffin had ever had and could not sympathize with her growing horror of the poorhouse.

Once the funeral and the reading of the will were over, I nearly collapsed. If ever a man had been used for purposes unnatural to him, that man was myself. In my room, trying not to listen to the sobs of Mary next door, I looked at the well-worn blank check I still was carrying and made up my mind to depart for London and Paris the next morning. I had personal problems to consider and I was anxious to deal with them in solitude and free of all immediate influences. I spent another sleepless night, alternating between the keenest anticipation of seeing Mr. Perkins and the Old World once more and qualms about parting with Mary. The only course for her, I thought, was to pursue her study of music further and make that her career. Her share of the steel securities,—which Mr. Perkins and I had selected because their name was the most incongruous on the list, that of the village of Nazareth in which the Prince of Peace had been born,—would keep her alive, and already she was an excellent organist and as such could command a good salary. She was better qualified to teach than the man who had instructed her. I meant to tell her of my plans at breakfast, but I was unable to open the subject. She was so forlorn, in the throes of her first great grief, so

completely surrounded by persons less sensitive than she was, so amazingly beautiful in black which is fatal to the looks of so many women, that I hurried through the meal and went upstairs again to pack my belongings. In my confusion I left the door ajar.

"Where are you going, Frank?" she said, from the doorway.

That was my chance. "I think I ought to go to London to consult Mr. Perkins," I said, with so little sincerity that my voice betrayed me. The anger and indignation she had tried to suppress for months broke out against me. She stamped her foot on the floor, her eyes blazing, and said:

"Well, why don't you go?"

Then her breath got caught in her throat, her bosom began to heave and she sank to the floor in tears. What could I do? I caught her in my arms and said, as if I had intended it all along:

"Would you really care to come with me, darling?"

She checked her sobs and I helped her to her feet and held her closely, while she said:

"But I thought you loved Beatrice!"

"No, I don't love Beatrice... We are good friends..." I replied. Of course I did love Beatrice. I loved Mary, too. What I wanted was both of them. I longed for what every man really wants, I suppose,—no work and two beautiful women. Not a wife and mistress, in the European fashion, one to exploit, the other to pamper, but two lovely, congenial girls who could live in peace together. But why go on? I am not complaining of Mary, marvelous creature that she is. She has made good progress with Guilmant. I love to hear her practicing in the dim cathedrals to which the eminence of her teacher secures her admission. I like Catholic churches, anyway, for although I was raised in

a Protestant family the inside of a barren meetinghouse has always made me itch. What are words to one who has been secretary to the Governor of Massachusetts? What can words mean to God, for that matter, compared to chords or the scent of quavering smoke? If ever I should feel inclined to pray, I should spread an Oriental rug on the lawn where God could get a clearer look at it, or have Mary play a Bach prelude with the stained glass windows open. Still, our peace cannot last forever. My check, which I wrote as large as I dared, is nearly exhausted and father, annoyed by our long absence abroad, is beginning to think I ought to be working again and that I am corrupting my wholesome young wife. The whole Griffin estate is in a tangle which may last through our lifetime, for Dunbar turned out to be a nephew of the probate judge, so we shall have to go back to America some time soon if nothing else turns up. I hate to think of it. I am less fit than ever for any kind of work, but father has the money and despises idleness. And Boston . . . oh, well . . . there's no use.

THE END

(Continued from front flap)

and his own desire to have only tranquillity for the end of his days.

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